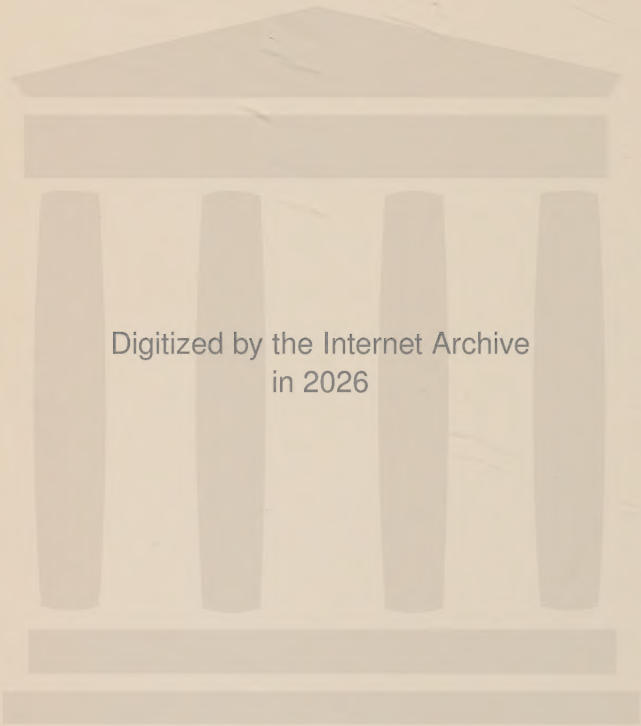
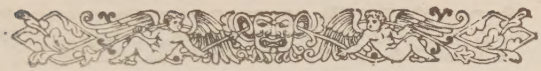
INDIANA
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

NORTHWEST

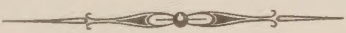

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/richardsteele0000stee_d1f7

THE MERMAID SERIES.



THE BEST PLAYS OF THE OLD DRAMATISTS.



RICHARD STEELE.

THE MERMAID SERIES.

THE BEST PLAYS OF THE OLD DRAMATISTS.

LITERAL REPRODUCTIONS OF THE OLD TEXT.

I.
THE BEST PLAYS OF CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE. Edited, with Critical Memoir and Notes, by HAVELOCK ELLIS; and containing a General Introduction to the Series by JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

II.
THE BEST PLAYS OF THOMAS OTWAY. Introduction and Notes by the Hon. RODEN NOEL.

III.
THE BEST PLAYS OF JOHN FORD. Edited by HAVELOCK ELLIS.

IV. & V.
THE BEST PLAYS OF PHILIP MASSINGER. With Critical and Biographical Essay and Notes, by ARTHUR SYMONS.

VI.
THE BEST PLAYS OF THOMAS HEYWOOD. Edited by A. W. VERITY. With Introduction by J. A. SYMONDS.

VII.
THE COMPLETE PLAYS OF WILLIAM WYCHERLEY. Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by W. C. WARD.

VIII.
NERO, AND OTHER PLAYS. Edited by H. P. HORNE, ARTHUR SYMONS, A. W. VERITY, and H. ELLIS.

IX. & X.
THE BEST PLAYS OF BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER. Introduction and Notes by J. ST. LOE STRACHEY.

XI.
THE COMPLETE PLAYS OF WILLIAM CONGREVE. Edited by ALEX. C. EWALD.

XII.
THE BEST PLAYS OF WEBSTER AND TOURNEUR. With an Introduction and Notes by JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

XIII. & XIV.
THE BEST PLAYS OF THOMAS MIDDLETON. With an Introduction by ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

XV.
THE BEST PLAYS OF JAMES SHIRLEY. With Introduction by EDMUND GOSSE.

XVI.
THE BEST PLAYS OF THOMAS DEKKER. Introductory Essay and Notes by ERNEST RHYS.

XVII.
THE BEST PLAYS OF BEN JONSON. Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by BRINSLEY NICHOLSON and C. H. HERFORD.

XVIII.
THE COMPLETE PLAYS OF RICHARD STEELE. Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by G. A. AITKEN.

M.r Richard Steele

Steele, Richard

THE BEST PLAYS OF THE OLD DRAMATISTS.

RICHARD STEELE

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES,

BY G. A. AITKEN.

"I lie and dream of your full Mermaid wine."—*Beaumont.*

LONDON: T. FISHER UNWIN.
NEW YORK: CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS.
1894.

Republished by
Scholarly Press, 22929 Industrial East, St. Clair Shores, Michigan 48080

PR 3702
A7
894B

Standard Book Number 403-00043-2

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY
NORTHWEST

"What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid! heard words that have been
So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,
As if that every one from whence they came
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
And had resolved to live a fool the rest
Of his dull life."

Master Francis Beaumont to Ben Jonson.

"Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?"

Keats.

This edition is printed on a high-quality, acid-free paper that meets specification requirements for fine book paper referred to as "300-year" paper

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
RICHARD STEELE	vii
THE FUNERAL	1
THE LYING LOVER	97
THE TENDER HUSBAND	189
THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS	265
THE SCHOOL OF ACTION (A FRAGMENT)	361
THE GENTLEMAN (A FRAGMENT)	399
APPENDIX	407

RICHARD STEELE.

I.

IT is as an essayist rather than a dramatist that men now think of Steele; and this is rightly so, for his best work is to be found in the periodical papers which he edited. There is, however, in his plays the same wit and humour that is to be found in the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, and his four comedies occupy an important position in the history of the English drama.

In this Introduction it will be sufficient to give a brief sketch of Steele's life, with especial reference to his relations with the theatre, which were intimate and varied.[1]

[1] Readers desirous of knowing more about Steele may be referred to Forster's Essay, first printed in the *Quarterly Review* for 18[illegible] to Mr. Dobson's "Richard Steele," 1886, in the *English Wo[illegible]* series; and to the *Life of Richard Steele*, 2 vols., 1889, by the present writer. From the last-mentioned work I have occasionally borrowed a phrase or sentence in this Introduction.

Richard Steele was born in Dublin in 1672; his father was an attorney who married a widow named Elinor Symes, but both his parents died while he was a child, and Steele passed into the care of a kind uncle, Henry Gascoigne, private secretary to the Duke of Ormond, and by his influence was placed upon the foundation of the Charterhouse in 1684. Two years later Joseph Addison, who was only a few weeks younger than Steele, entered that famous school, and the two boys formed the closest of friendships. In 1689 Steele followed Addison to Oxford, entering at Christ Church; but in 1691 he was made a postmaster of Merton College. He would have many introductions, for his uncle was well known at the University, and his friend Addison was a distinguished scholar at Magdalen. We are told that he wrote a comedy while at college, but burned it on being told by a friend that it was worthless. When he left Oxford he took with him the love of "the whole society."

Steele enlisted in 1694 as a private in the Duke of Ormond's regiment of Guards. Private soldiers in the Guards were often gentlemen's sons, and Steele was in reality a cadet, looking forward to the position of ensign. When Queen Mary died in the following year he published an anonymous poem, *The Procession*, the work of "a gentleman of the army," and dedicated it to Lord Cutts, Colonel of the Coldstream Guards. He was rewarded by being made a confidential

agent to Lord Cutts, who also obtained for him an ensign's commission in his own regiment. By 1700 we find Steele referred to as "Captain Steele," and in friendly intercourse with Sir Charles Sedley, Vanbrugh, Garth, Congreve, and other wits. In that year, too, he fought a duel with a Captain Kelly, "one or two of his acquaintances having," as he says, "thought fit to misuse him, and try their valour upon him." The event made a serious impression upon Steele, who, much in advance of his age, never ceased to remonstrate in his after writings against the "barbarous custom of duelling."

The life of a soldier stationed at the Tower was certain to lead a young man of Steele's sociable, hearty nature, into excesses. It was, as he says, "a life exposed to much irregularity"; and as he often did things of which he repented, he wrote, for his own use, a little book called *The Christian Hero;* and finding that this secret admonition was too weak he published the volume in 1701, with his name on the title-page. It was "an argument proving that no principles but those of religion are sufficient to make a great man." A second edition was called for in three months, but the only effect of the publication in the regiment was "that from being reckoned no undelightful companion he was soon reckoned a disagreeable fellow." Under these circumstances he says he felt it to be "incumbent upon him to enliven his character, for which

reason he wrote the comedy called *The Funeral*, in which (though full of incidents that move laughter) virtue and vice appear just as they ought to do. Nothing can make the town so fond of a man as a successful play." Let us look for a moment at the condition of the drama at the opening of the eighteenth century.

II.

Dryden had died in 1700, and Congreve produced his last important play in that year. Wicherley, though still living, had long ceased to write, but Farquhar and Vanbrugh were busy about this time with their best work. Of other dramatists who were then writing there are none more important than Rowe, Dennis, Cibber, Gildon, D'Urfey, Mrs. Manley, and Mrs. Centlivre. The licentiousness of the Restoration plays had been fully equalled by the coarseness of many of those written under William III.; and at the end of the seventeenth century a determined protest had been made by men who realised the evil effect of what was acted for the amusement of the people. Jeremy Collier, a nonjuring clergyman, led the attack by publishing, in 1698, *A Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage*. Collier was intemperate, and there were numer-

ous replies; but his main position was not shaken. In the meantime proclamations were issued against the acting of anything immoral or irreligious, and a Society for the Reformation of Manners was founded, which was soon followed by similar societies in various parts of the country.

In October, 1701, Steele, who says that he was "a great admirer" of Collier's work, arranged with Christopher Rich, of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, for the production of his comedy, *The Funeral, or Grief à-la-Mode*, as soon as they could conveniently.[1] The play was acted shortly afterwards, and it was printed in December. In the prologue Steele said that he knew he had numerous friends present, and that they would show it, "and for the fellow-soldier save the poet." The very frankness of this half-serious appeal shows that the play did not need artificial support, and Cibber says that it met with "more than expected success." It is very sprightly, but Steele did not omit, by the legitimate use of satire, to attack the mockery of grief by his ridicule of the undertaker, and the mockery of justice in the person of Puzzle, the lawyer. As in all his writings, he shows, by the characters of Lady Sharlot and Lady Harriot, the respect he felt for true women. "He was," says Thackeray, in words which are certainly true of Steele's immediate predecessors, "the

[1] See Appendix.

first of our writers who really seemed to admire and respect them." The contrast between virtue and vice, to the advantage of the former—an object which had not usually been aimed at by the preceding writers of comedies—was furnished by the character of Lady Brumpton, the widow, whose husband was not really dead. The description of her schemes, and her conversations with her woman Tattleaid and her lady friends, are admirable, and were not forgotten by Sheridan when writing the *School for Scandal.* Tattleaid says to the widow, "I warrant you, madam, I'll manage 'em all; and indeed, madam, the men are really very silly creatures, 'tis no such hard matter. They rulers! They governors! I warrant you, indeed!" Whereupon the widow observes, "Ay, Tattleaid, they imagine themselves mighty things, but government founded on force only is a brutal power. We rule them by their affections, which blinds them into belief that they rule us, or at least are in the government with us. But in this nation our power is absolute." The conversation in the last act, when the widow is preparing for the funeral, and Tattleaid has her mouth full of pins, is equally clever.

It would be difficult to find better comedy than the instructions of Sable, the undertaker, to his men: "Let's have no laughing, now, on any provocation [*makes faces*]. Look yonder, that hale, well-looking puppy! You ungrateful scoundrel,

id not I pity you, take you out of a great man's service, and show you the pleasure of receiving wages? Did not I give you ten, then fifteen, now twenty shillings a week, to be sorrowful? and the more I give you, I think, the gladder you are." And again, "Look you, now, you are all upon the sneer; let me have none but downright stupid countenances. . . . . Ye stupid rogues, whom I have picked out of all the rubbish of mankind, and fed for your eminent worthlessness, attend, and know that I speak you this moment stiff and immutable to all sense of noise, mirth, or laughter [*makes mouths at them as they pass by him to bring them to a constant countenance*]. So, they are pretty well—pretty well." Excellent, too, is the talk of the lawyer and his clerk: "I hope to see the day when the indenture shall be the exact measure of the land that passes by it; for 'tis a discouragement to the gown that every ignorant rogue of an heir should in a word or two understand his father's meaning, and hold ten acres of land by half an acre of parchment." There is an admirable dialogue about their lovers between Lady Sharlot and Lady Harriot, in the second act, and in the fourth act Steele's comrades would be delighted with the talk of the soldiers, one of whom had saved an officer's life, but had now been whipped from constable to constable all the way from Cornwall to London. "That's due by the courtesy of England to all that want in red coats; besides, there's an Act

that makes us free of all Corporations, and that's the ceremony of it." When Tatter says, "In our last clothing in the regiment I served in afore, the colonel had one shirt afore, the agent one behind, and every captain of the regiment a button," Lord Hardy, smiling, replies, "Hush, you rogue, you talk mutiny," and his Lordship's man at once gives the soldier a blow on the head: "Ay, sirrah, what have you to do with more knowledge than that of your right hand from your left?" But later on Trim remarks that "after all, 'tis upon the neck of such scoundrels as these gentlemen that we great captains build our renown."

There are obvious weak points in the plot, notably the introduction of bigamy on Lady Brumpton's part, in order to remove the difficulty about the will made by Lord Brumpton in her favour. There was, of course, nothing to prevent the Earl executing a fresh will when he again came to life, after finding out his wife's true character. For the rest, we may refer to an interesting contemporary criticism in Charles Gildon's little book, *A Comparison between the Two Stages*, published in April, 1702, in the form of a dialogue between Ramble, Sullen, and Chagrin, a critic. When Ramble proposes to speak of *The Funeral*, Sullen says, "'Tis a dangerous matter to talk of this play; the Town has given it such applause, 'twill be an ungrateful undertaking to call their judgments in

question." He agrees that it is diverting, and written with noble intentions. Ramble remarks, "I hear the gentleman is a fine companion, and passes for a wit of the first rank;" but Sullen and the Critic agree that *The Funeral* is not a just comedy, the principle being much amiss. They argue that Lord Brumpton could not, as was supposed, have lain dead in the house so long, and no one see him; while intrigues and amours were going on in the meantime in the house of death. It is farce, not comedy. Look at the manner of Lady Sharlot's escape in the coffin—a forced situation which was quite unnecessary. Is it likely that a man of Cabinet's wickedness would have been frightened into a confession by a ghost? The undertaker is not adequately punished; for he was paid anyhow. Nevertheless, the satire on some widows, and on undertakers, is happy. The Critic thinks the language "too concise and stiff" for comedy; see, for example, the scene between Lord Brumpton and Trusty in Act I., and that between Trusty and Cabinet in Act IV. There are difficult lines in the Preface, and long parentheses in the play. Ramble turns round and asks, "Did you ever read *The Christian Hero?*" The Critic says, "Yes; what do you mean by asking me?" Ramble replies, "Pray don't be angry. Is it not an extraordinary thing?" The answer is, "Look ye, sir—to answer you dogmatically, and in a few words—No." Critic

gives reasons: "Thus, then, briefly: 'Tis a chaos, 'tis a confusion of thoughts, rude and undigested; though he had the advice of an ingenious man to put it into method. 'Tis dated from the Tower-guard, as a present to his Colonel, that his Colonel might think him, even in time of duty, a very contemplative soldier, and, I suppose, by the roughness of the style, he writ it there, on the butt-end of a musket." Sullen replies, "Hush! no reproaches; the gentleman has done very well, and chose a worthy subject," and Ramble adds, "It bore two editions." The Critic rejoins, "It did not; it was but once printed, nor is all that impression sold; 'tis a trick of the booksellers to get it off."[1] Ramble, however, maintains his good opinion of the author. The discussion of *The Funeral* is then resumed; and Ramble suggests that, in the opening of Act III., Mademoiselle's "promises" is a mistake for "premises." The Critic objects, among other things, to the use of the word "bagatelle." And then Sullen turns to the merits of the play—the characters, the visiting scene, the incidents, all flowing naturally, and the moral, which is the true result of the piece. Ramble adds warm praises of the author—who is described as "indued with singular honesty, a noble disposition, and a conformity of good manners"—and his works, and

[1] This is not true. The second edition was corrected and enarged.

the Critic hopes, if he will divert the town with another play, that it may be more "correct." The author does not want understanding.

Steele says that *The Funeral*, "with some particulars enlarged upon to his advantage," had obtained for him the notice of the king, and that "his name, to be provided for, was in the last table-book ever worn by the glorious and immortal William the Third." He was, however, disappointed, for King William died in March, 1702. But about that time Steele was made a Captain of Foot in a new regiment whose Colonel was Lord Lucas, whom Steele had known at the Tower. Each officer raised a company, and Steele was sent to Landguard Fort, opposite Harwich, where he did everything in his power for the good of the men under him. At the end of the year, or at the beginning of 1703, he agreed to sell to Christopher Rich a comedy, which was nearly finished, called *The Election of Gotham*. Of that play nothing further is known; but Steele obtained £72 from Rich, to be repaid in March.[1] Rich said that Steele was in want of money and in danger of arrest, and it is a fact that the first of

[1] See Appendix.

a long series of actions for debt had some time before been commenced against him. Steele, however, said that the money was paid to induce him to write more, and upon condition that he should bring his next play to Rich, whom he charged with oppression and extortion. We shall hear more of this quarrel.

Complaints against the immorality of the stage increased in number. In 1702 Queen Anne directed that certain actors at Lincoln's Inn Fields should be prosecuted, and they were found guilty of "uttering impious, lewd, and immoral expressions." Collier wrote *A Dissuasive from the Play House*, which was answered by Dennis, and the Lord Chamberlain ordered that all plays must be licensed by the Master of the Revels, who was not to pass anything not strictly agreeable to religion and good manners. At that time, it should be remembered, the play began about five, and ended at eight, "for the convenience of the Qualities resorting to the Park after." Such was the condition of affairs when Steele's second comedy, *The Lying Lover, or the Ladies' Friendship*, was produced, in December, 1703, to run for six nights.

In his *Apology* Steele afterwards wrote of the *Lying Lover*:—"Mr. Collier had, about the time wherein this was published, written against the immorality of the stage. I was (as far as I durst for fear of witty men, upon whom he had been too severe) a great admirer of his work,

and took it into my head to write a comedy in the severity he required. In this play I make the spark or hero kill a man in his drink, and finding himself in prison the next morning, I give him the contrition which he ought to have on that occasion. . . . I can't tell, sir, what they would have me do to prove me a Churchman; but I think I have appeared one even in so trifling a thing as a comedy; and considering me as a comic poet, I have been a martyr and confessor for the Church; for this play was damned for its piety." In the Dedication of the play to the Duke of Ormond, he says, "The design of it is to banish out of conversation all entertainment which does not proceed from simplicity of mind, good nature, friendship, and honour;" and in the Preface he again refers to the manner in which the English stage had offended against the laws of morals and religion; "I thought, therefore, it would be an honest ambition to attempt a comedy which might be no improper entertainment in a Christian commonwealth." He admits that the anguish and sorrow in the prison scene "are, perhaps, an injury to the rules of comedy; but I am sure they are a justice to those of morality." It was to be hoped that wit would now recover from its apostacy, for the Queen had "taken the stage under her consideration."

The play was based upon Corneille's *Le Menteur*, but the latter and more serious portion

is entirely Steele's. Alarcon, from whom Corneille borrowed, made his liar marry a girl he did not care for instead of the one he loved; Corneille made the liar's love change, so that his marriage met his wishes; while Steele represents Bookwit's inveterate love of romancing, generally in self-glorification, as leading to a duel with Penelope's lover, and to his own imprisonment in Newgate. This trouble teaches him the necessary lesson, and the hope is held out to him, at the end, of the hand of Penelope's friend, Victoria. "There is no gallantry in love but truth," are his last words.

There are many amusing passages in the *Lying Lover*, and young Bookwit is very entertaining in the earlier acts, especially in his boastful account to the ladies of his imaginary campaigns:—"There's an intimate of mine, a general officer, who has often said, 'Tom, if thou would'st but stick to any one application, thou might'st be anything.' 'Tis my misfortune, madam, to have a mind too extensive." In the second act there is a pleasant account of "the pretty merchants and their dealers" at the New Exchange, where Bookwit was bewildered by the darts and glances against which he was not impregnable; and in the third act, Penelope and Victoria, who are both fascinated by the young liar, be-patch and be-powder each other in the hope of making their rival ugly, while they profess—like their maids—to be on the

closest terms of friendship. In the fourth act, after the duel, the constable remarks, "Sir, what were you running so fast for? There's a man killed in the garden, and you're a fine gentleman, and it must be you — for good honest people only beat one another." And there is an admirable scene in Newgate, where Bookwit is received with respect by highwaymen and others because he is supposed to have killed a man. An alchemist—"the ignorant will needs call it coining"—who is about to be hung, says, "Yet let me tell you, sir, because by secret sympathy I'm yours, I must acquaint you, if you can obtain the favour of an opportunity and a crucible, I can show projection—directly Sol, sir, Sol, sir, more bright than that high luminary the Latins called so—wealth shall be yours; we'll turn every bar about us into golden ingots.—Sir, can you lend me half-a-crown?"

It is only in the last act that art is sacrificed to the moral purpose that Steele had in his view. The ladies repent of their mutual plottings; and Bookwit, who believes that he has killed his opponent, looks forward to death, and makes many solemn speeches, printed in blank verse, which will to a great extent account for the failure of the piece. Bookwit's father is broken-hearted; and a friend heroically declares that it was he, and not Bookwit, who killed Lovemore; whereupon Lovemore says, "I can hold out no longer," and brings matters to a happy

ending by explaining that he had in reality been only slightly wounded. Hazlitt's words respecting Steele's plays are truer of the *Lying Lover* than of the rest: "It is almost a misnomer to call them comedies; they are rather homilies in dialogues." But even in this piece there is, as we have seen, nothing that can properly be called homily except at the close. Ward has described the play more accurately, as "the first instance of sentimental comedy proper. It is attempted to produce an effect, not by making vice and folly ridiculous, but by moving compassion."

It was Steele, rather than young Bookwit, who says in the first scene, "I don't know how to express myself—but a woman, methinks, is a being between us and angels. She has something in her that at the same time gives awe and invitation; and I swear to you, I was never out in't yet, but I always judged of men as I observed they judged of women: there is nothing shows a man so much as the object of his affections."

IV.

The battle of Blenheim was won in August, 1704, and in December Addison obtained fame and office by his poem *The Campaign*. Steele, who was in constant intercourse with him, said in after years that Addison, in spite of his bash-

fulness and modesty, "was above all men in that talent we call humour." At the various coffee-houses, and especially at the Kitcat Club, the friends met all the famous wits of the day. Steele endeavoured, in 1704, without success, to increase his income by obtaining a troop in a regiment of Dragoons, which the Duke of Ormond was about to raise. Next year Lord Lucas died, and Steele's connection with the army appears to have been severed not long afterwards.

In March, 1705, Steele's third play, *The Tender Husband; or, the Accomplished Fools*, was given to Rich, and it was acted in April and published in May. The early writers on the subject constantly stated that *The Tender Husband* appeared in 1703, and was followed by *The Lying Lover*, and they then explained that the failure of the latter piece caused Steele to abandon play-writing for many years. In reality, however, *The Lying Lover* was the earlier play of the two by more than a year.[1]

The Tender Husband ran for five nights, but was not a financial success. Addison wrote the Prologue and assisted in the play itself, and to Addison it was dedicated, though, as Steele said, his friend would "be surprised, in the midst of a daily and familiar conversation, with an address which bears so distant an air as a public Dedication." "My purpose in this appli-

[1] *Athenæum*, Sep. 20, 1884, article by the present writer.

cation is only to show the esteem I have for you, and that I look upon my intimacy with you as one of the most valuable enjoyments of my life." The reception given to the play was such "as to make me think it no improper Memorial of an inviolable friendship." In the last number of the original series of the *Spectator*, Steele afterwards wrote: —"I remember when I finished *The Tender Husband*, I told him there was nothing I so ardently wished as that we might sometime or other publish a work written by us both, which should bear the name of *The Monument*, in memory of our friendship. I heartily wish what I have done here were as honorary to that sacred name, as learning, wit, and humanity render those pieces which I have taught the reader how to distinguish for his. When the play above-mentioned was last acted, there were so many applauded strokes in it which I had from the same hand, that I thought very meanly of myself that I had never publicly acknowledged them."

Warned by the fate of *The Lying Lover*, Steele seems to have determined that there must be less sermonising in the new play. The result is that *The Tender Husband* is, as a whole, very amusing; but unfortunately a second plot —alluded to in the title — is woven into the story which gives to the play its interest; and as this account of the manner in which the "tender husband" tries the faithfulness of a

foolish wife by means of his mistress, disguised as a man, is unwholesome in tone and unnatural, it spoils what would otherwise be an excellent farcical comedy, and at the same time has no real connection with the rest of the play. Fortunately, however, Mrs. Clerimont's weaknesses are hardly brought before the spectator except in the first scene and the last act. The rest of the piece describes the love affairs of Biddy Tipkin, a banker's niece—acted by the charming Mrs. Oldfield—whose head has been so completely filled with the romances which she has read that she begs to be called Parthenissa :—"If you ask my name, I must confess you put me upon revealing what I always keep as the greatest secret I have—for, would you believe it, they have called me—I don't know how to own it, but they have called me—Bridget." To her aunt she says, "Do you think that I can ever marry a man that's true and hearty? What a peasant-like amour do these coarse words impart? . . . . Good madam, don't upbraid me with my mother Bridget, and an excellent housewife." She longs for a lover who will be associated with disguise, serenade, and adventure ; and as she is an heiress, Captain Clerimont —the usual gentlemanly adventurer of seventeenth century comedy—is willing to humour her whims, and he is so successful that, though she is of opinion that "a lover should sigh in private, and languish whole years before he

reveals his passion; he should retire into some solitary grove, and make the woods and wild beasts his confidants," yet she is soon able to admit "I am almost of opinion that had Oroondates been as pressing as Clerimont, *Cassandra* had been but a pocket-book: but it looks so ordinary to go out at a door to be married—indeed I ought to be taken out of a window, and run away with." Biddy Tipkin is the direct prototype of Sheridan's Lydia Languish, and Goldsmith was equally indebted to Biddy's cousin, Humphry Gubbin, for the idea of Tony Lumpkin. This booby son of an old-fashioned squire —the forerunner of Fielding's Squire Western— is as amusing as Biddy, whom his father wishes him to marry. Humphry, however, had scruples, and "boggled a little" at marrying so near a relation as a cousin. His father had been in the habit of beating him like a child, and it was not till he came to town that he knew he was of age, or what was his fortune. Mr. Pounce, a lawyer, anxious to secure Biddy for Captain Clerimont, advises Humphry not to be fooled any longer; and when Humphry remarks, "To tell you truly, I took an antipathy to my cousin ever since my father proposed her to me; and since everybody knows I came up to be married, I don't care to go down and look baulked," Pounce seizes the opportunity of providing for his sister Mrs. Fairlove, the mistress of the elder Clerimont. Biddy and Humphry

having explained their feelings to each other, Humphry says, "I'll find out a way for us to get rid of one another, and deceive the old folks that would couple us;" but when Biddy replies, "This wears the face of an amour—there is something in that thought which makes thy presence less insupportable," he exclaims, "Nay, nay, now you're growing fond; if you come with these maids' tricks to say you hate at first and afterwards like me, you'll spoil the whole design."

Other characters, such as Biddy's "Urganda of an Aunt," who is not free from notions of romance on her own account, Pounce the disreputable lawyer, Sir Harry Gubbin, and Captain Clerimont, who obtains access to Biddy by disguising himself as a painter—an idea borrowed from Molière's *Le Sicilien*—add to the amusement of the piece; and then there are smart sayings in abundance, such as the elder Clerimont's: "I don't design you to personate a real man, but only a pretty gentleman;" or Pounce's: "Oh, dear sir, a fine lady's clothes are not old by being worn, but by being seen." These merits render the weakness of the ending the more regrettable. The moral is obvious: wife or son should be restrained only by generous bonds, for "wives to obey must love, children revere." If any one, after reading the episode of the elder Clerimont and his wife, is surprised at Steele's statement that he had "been very care-

ful to avoid everything that might look ill-natured, immoral, or prejudicial to what the better part of mankind hold sacred and honourable," it should be remembered that in Steele's play a repentant wife is forgiven by her husband, whose own conduct was far from blameless, while in the comedies of his predecessors it was common for the wife to hoodwink her steady-going husband triumphantly. Compared with such plays Steele's work is harmless, and even moral, in its intention.

It is impossible to say which were the "applauded strokes" contributed by Addison to *The Tender Husband.* Some writers, bearing in mind the Tory Foxhunter of the *Freeholder*, have attributed to Addison the character of Sir Harry Gubbin; others, remembering the description of a lady's library in the *Spectator*, have suggested that his hand is to be found in the description of Biddy Tipkin; and some, again, have thought that he was concerned rather in the serious portions of the play. Perhaps Addison's help consisted more in general hints given while the piece was under revision than in the contribution of any special portion. But speculation is vain in this matter. Addison and Steele were friends who were wont to work together without any jealous thought as to the exact share which each of them contributed.

It will be convenient to notice here a Chancery suit which arose out of Steele's arrangement

with Christopher Rich, of the Drury Lane Theatre, respecting the production of his plays. Steele was the complainant, and in his bill, dated 1707, he said that about December, 1702, Rich paid him £72 on the understanding that Steele would write for him another play. Steele gave a bond of £144; and in 1705 furnished Rich with *The Tender Husband*, which was acted on the condition that the author was to have the profits of two days' acting in the autumn. The profits exceeded £72, but Rich would not pay over the balance, and commenced an action for the £144. Steele, therefore prayed that these proceedings might be stayed by injunction.

Rich, in his reply, said that the terms of the agreement for the production of *The Funeral* having been carried out to Steele's satisfaction, Steele agreed, in January, 1703, to give Rich a new play, and at the same time borrowed £72, to be repaid with interest in March, upon pain of the forfeiture of £144. Steele did not pay; but in 1705 he produced *The Tender Husband*. The profits, however, were so small that £10 8s. 2d. was all that, according to the agreement, Rich was called upon to pay as the result of the first four days' acting. Steele agreed that this sum should go to the use of the company, and that the play should be acted for his benefit once in the following winter. The performance took place in November, though Steele at the last objected that there would not be a sufficiently

good audience. The treasurer was told to give Steele the balance £2 17s. 6d., which resulted from this performance, together with the £10 8s. 2d. already mentioned; but Steele neglected or refused to take the money. Rich added that the play had been acted several times at the Haymarket Theatre without his consent—which was quite true; and he prayed that this action might be dismissed, with costs.

There is no further record of the case until April 29, 1710, when Rich's counsel showed that his client had submitted an answer to the plaintiff's bill on January 27, 1708, and that Steele had since then taken no action. The Court thereupon ordered that the bill should be dismissed, with costs, which were to be taxed.[1] The pleadings, which contain much that is of interest to the student of theatrical history, are given in full in the Appendix.

V.

In the earlier part of 1705, probably soon after the production of *The Tender Husband*, Steele married a widow, Margaret Stretch, whose maiden name was Ford. This lady belonged to a good family in Barbados; and her brother,

[1] Public Record Office, Chancery Decrees, 1709 B, p. 320, "Steele v. Rich."

Major Robert Ford, who made his will in December, 1704, left to her the residue of his property. He was then about to sail for England, and within a few weeks he was taken prisoner by a French privateer, and died on the high seas. In March, 1705, his sister took out letters of administration, and soon afterwards she was married to Steele, who subsequently wrote to the mother of the lady who was to be his second wife: "My late wife had so extreme a value for me that she, by fine, conveyed to me her whole estate situate in Barbados, which, with the stock and slaves (proper security being given for the rent), is let at £850 per annum, at half yearly payments, that is to say, £425 each first of May, and £425 each first of December. This estate came to her encumbered with a debt of £3,000, by legacies and debts of her brother, whose executrix she was as well as heiress."

In January, 1707, we find Steele administering to the property of his wife, who had died in December. Mary Scurlock, of whom we shall hear immediately, was at the funeral. There is no source of information respecting the deceased lady, except the writings of the scandalous Mrs. Manley, who had quarrelled with Steele, but certainly knew something of the facts, if she chose to speak the truth. Her statement is that Steele had embarked in alchemy, and had been ruined by a rogue who cheated him, when he found an opportunity of repairing his fortunes

by marrying a rich but elderly lady. Hints are thrown out that an odd misfortune, occasioned by Steele's sister, was the cause of his wife's death; and that he found consolation in "a younger wife, and a cry'd up beauty." It is true that Steele had a sister who was mad; but his second wife, who knew the facts, was willing to marry him in a few months, which she would hardly have done if there had been any suspicious circumstances connected with her friend's death. Possibly, however, the end was accelerated by some fright. There can be no doubt that Steele's sanguine nature had led him, at a period not exactly defined, to experiment with the crucible, in the hope of discovering the oft-sought-for *aurum potabile*. When he wrote the scene in the *Lying Lover*, in which Charcoal appears, he would seem to have discovered the absurdity of his study of occult science.

In a prologue to Vanbrugh's *The Mistake*, acted at the new theatre in the Haymarket on December 27, 1705, Steele satirised the popular demand for dresses, music, and dancing: "If 'tis a comedy, you ask — Who dance?" In August, 1706, he was appointed gentleman-writer to Prince George of Denmark, with a salary of £100 a year, "not subject to taxes." In the course of the following year he contributed verses to a new monthly paper called *The Muses' Mercury*, and the first number (January, 1707) contained a reference to Mrs. Steele:—"Had not

the death of a dear friend hindered Captain Steele from finishing a comedy of his, it would also have been acted this season." We shall see that in the years that followed Steele often contemplated the production of another play, but was no doubt prevented by his numerous other occupations. He was appointed Gazetteer by Robert Harley, on Arthur Maynwaring's recommendation, in April or May, with a salary of £300, liable to a tax of £45, and he endeavoured to obey "the rule observed by all Ministries, to keep that paper very innocent and very insipid"; but, inevitably, there were often complaints either about what was inserted or what was omitted.

The Muses' Mercury for September contained the following paragraph:—"As for comedies, there's no great expectation of anything of that kind since Mr. Farquhar's death: the two gentlemen who could probably always succeed in the comic vein, Mr. Congreve and Captain Steele, having affairs of much greater importance to take up their time and thoughts." In that month Steele married Mary Scurlock, a lady of twenty-eight years of age, and heiress to the late Jonathan Scurlock, of Carmarthen, who was descended from an ancient Irish family. Her estate was worth £400 a year, but there was a demand upon it of £1,400. Mary Scurlock had, as we have seen, known her husband's first wife, but the courtship does not seem to have begun until August. The lady saved all Steele's

letters, both then and during her married life. He begged that they might be shown to no man, as others could not judge of "so delicate a circumstance as the commerce between man and wife"; but half a century after his death the whole were published, and these letters form one of the most interesting studies in existence. The charming notes to "dear Prue"—often sent daily, and sometimes more frequently, from wherever he might happen to be engaged—show us the writer's inmost feelings, and in spite of his obvious weaknesses he comes well out of the ordeal. He loved his wife and children to the end, and if he was careless and constantly in debt, "Prue" was somewhat strait-laced and exacting. It should never be forgotten that we have but two or three of her replies. The letters written during the love-making are delightful, and Steele himself printed some of them in the *Tatler* and *Spectator*. The young lady was not without experience, for three years earlier a "wretched impudence," named Henry Owen, had brought an unsuccessful suit against her for breach of contract of marriage. That she was much in love with Steele is evident from a letter of hers to her mother, in which she praised his richly-endowed mind, his person, his temper, his understanding, and his morals. It was her "first and only inclination," and she was sure that she should "never meet with a prospect of happiness if this should vanish." Miss Scurlock, who had

something of the prude in her, desired that the marriage should be secret, and would not have it known until her mother's consent had been received. Before the end of the year Steele had taken a house in Bury Street, which was conveniently near to St. James's church, whither his wife frequently resorted. Steele's own prayers, written before and after marriage for his private use, show the manly religion which was the foundation of his character.

Apologies for absence from home were soon necessitated by engagements of one kind or another. This was the kind of note which Steele often sent to his "absolute governess":—

"Devil Tavern, Temple Bar,
Jan. 3d, 1708.

"DEAR PRUE,

"I have partly succeeded in my business to-day, and enclose two guineas as an earnest of more. Dear Prue, I can't come home to dinner. I languish for your welfare, and will never be a moment careless more.

"Your faithful husband,
"R. STEELE.

"Send me word you have received this."

The Barbados property, which was necessarily left to the care of an agent, gave much trouble, and it is clear that Steele's views as to the probable income to be derived from that and other sources was very rose-coloured. He was frequently

embarrassed, but one debt usually arose from a habit of borrowing money to pay off another creditor, and the actual amount owing at any time seems never to have been very large. Mrs. Steele was not always on good terms with her mother, and on one occasion that lady proposed to settle a portion of her property on Steele and his wife jointly, and to make the whole estate liable to a charge in his favour in case he outlived his wife without issue. This Steele declined, begging that the whole of whatever was left to them might be fixed on his wife and her posterity.

VI.

Swift returned to England in November, 1707, and was soon in frequent intercourse with Steele and Addison. In March, 1708, he published his famous "Predictions for the year 1708, by Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq.," an attack on an astrologer and almanack-maker, John Partridge. In this pamphlet Swift declared that he, unlike others, was a real astrologer, and prophesied that Partridge would die on March 29. On the 30th of that month another pamphlet appeared, giving a circumstantial account of Partridge's death. The almanack-maker protested that he was as well as ever; but Swift replied that it was evident that the man was dead, because no man living

could write such rubbish as was contained in the new almanack for 1709. Other wits joined in the controversy, and when Steele began *The Tatler* he adopted the name of "Isaac Bickerstaff," which, he said, Swift had made famous through all parts of Europe.

Steele obtained a house at Hampton Wick, and there his "dear ruler" was established in 1708, with a chariot and two or four horses, a saddle-horse, a footman, a gardener, a boy Will, her own woman, and a boy who could speak Welsh. "I shall make it the business of my life," wrote Steele, "to make you easy and happy: consult your cool thoughts and you'll know that 'tis the glory of a woman to be her husband's friend and companion, and not his sovereign director." In another letter he said, "It is not in your power to make me otherwise than your affectionate, faithful, and tender husband." With yet another note he sent "seven pen'orth of walnuts at five a penny, which is the greatest proof I can give you at present of my being, with my whole heart, yours," &c. Outside the letter he added, below the address, "There are but 29 walnuts." In October he lost a place through the death of Prince George, but the Queen gave him a pension of £100 a-year. Debts, however, were numerous, and an execution was put in on account of arrears of rent for the house in Bury Street. When Addison was made Secretary to Lord Wharton, the new Viceroy of

Ireland, Steele hoped to get an Under-secretaryship, but was disappointed. In March, 1709, his eldest daughter, Elizabeth, was born, and had for godfathers Addison and Mr. Wortley Montagu. In the following month Steele began the great work of his life.

The periodical literature of the day was of little value. The few papers that existed were either brief news-sheets, or were repositories for questions and answers, supplied by the readers, and of feeble verse. The only periodical which was in any sense a forerunner of the *Tatler* was Defoe's *Review*, in which part of the space was set apart for "Advice from the Scandalous Club," where men, not parties, and things rather than persons, were censured. When the quantity of matter was too great for the available space, a monthly "Supplementary Journal" was published. Afterwards Defoe gave a friendly greeting to Steele's new work, which dealt with the social questions and follies of the day in a style that was more thorough, and at the same time more genial, than his own.

The first number of the *Tatler* was published on April 22, 1709, and it appeared three times a week. It was a single folio sheet, price one penny, and four numbers were given away gratuitously. The reader found there items of news, accounts of popular entertainments, poetry, and learning. As time went on the news articles were dropped, and each number was gradually

confined to one subject. Isaac Bickerstaff was described as "an old man, a philosopher, a humourist, an astrologer, and a censor." The other characters described from time to time are not essential to the general plan of the paper. "The general purpose of the whole," as Steele wrote at the close, "has been to recommend truth, innocence, honour, and virtue, as the chief ornaments of life." He was satisfied if one vice had been destroyed, or a morning's cheerfulness given to an honest mind. As censor he thought fit to speak under a mask, because he knew that his own life was "at best but pardonable."

Addison rendered much valuable aid, which Steele acknowledged in such generous terms that some writers have represented that all that was valuable in the paper was by his friend. The fact, however, is that of the 271 numbers that appeared about 188 were by Steele, and only 42 by Addison, while 36 were written by them jointly. Steele started the paper, and Addison knew nothing of the authorship until six numbers had appeared, and did not render any material assistance during the early months of publication. The aid given by Swift and others is too slight to need mention. Steele had to write, whether he was prepared or not, whenever he had no paper by anyone else ready; but his most careless contributions are interesting, because he wrote from the heart, and was a man full of kindly impulse. It is sufficient to remark here that in

the articles on public amusements he provided admirable criticisms, and was always ready to assist a good actor. Years afterwards Cibber wrote that during a season of depression excellent audiences had often been drawn together at a day's notice by the influence of a single *Tatler*. Steele was much in advance of his time in the way in which he quoted and appreciated Shakespeare and Milton. As Gay said, he rescued learning "out of the hands of pedants and fools, and discovered the true method of making it amiable and lovely to all mankind."

Steele's income was increased by £300 a year in January, 1710, when he was appointed a Commissioner of the Stamp Office. At that time there was great excitement about the pending trial of the Tory, Dr. Sacheverell, two of whose sermons were condemned as seditious libels, reflecting on the Queen, the Revolution, and the Protestant succession. Sacheverell was found guilty in March and forbidden to preach for three years, but the sentence was nominal, and the Tories were in reality triumphant. In June Sunderland, the Duke of Marlborough's son-in-law, was dismissed, and in August Godolphin was called upon to give up the seals, and Harley became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and practically head of the Government. Papers satirising Harley had appeared in the *Tatler* in July, and on September 10 Swift, who had just returned to England, wrote to Esther Johnson, "Steele

will certainly loose his Gazetteer's place, all the world detesting his engaging in politics." A few days later Whig statesmen were turned out in favour of the Earl of Rochester, the Duke of Buckingham, and Henry St. John, and in October Steele was deprived of his place, or, as Swift afterwards stated, resigned to avoid being discarded.

The Tory *Examiner* had been established in August; in November Swift contributed his first paper. He still met Addison and Steele as friends, but not so often as formerly, and he says he intervened with Harley in favour of Steele's retention of his office of Commissioner. The Ministry were by no means desirous of quarrelling with a popular writer, and Steele kept this post until 1713. The *Tatler* came to a sudden end on January 2, 1711, perhaps as the result of a compact with the Government. Even Addison appears not to have been consulted when this step was taken.

VII.

It was commonly said that Steele had given up the *Tatler* through want of matter. How entirely erroneous this statement was is shown by the appearance, two months later (March 1, 1711), of the first number of the *Spectator*, which was issued daily until December 6, 1712. Addi-

son commenced it with a description of the Spectator himself; in the second number Steele gave an account of the club where the plan of the work was supposed to be arranged, and drew the first sketch of its members—Sir Roger de Coverley, the country gentleman; Sir Andrew Freeport, the merchant; Captain Sentry, the soldier; Will Honeycomb, the fine gentleman about town; and the clergyman. The most important of the papers relating to Sir Roger de Coverley are by Addison, who was at his best in the *Spectator*, of which he wrote 274 numbers, while Steele was responsible for 236. The world, however, owes Addison to Steele, who rightly said, "I claim to myself the merit of having extorted excellent productions from a person of the greatest abilities, who would not have let them appear by any other means." Even Swift wrote that Steele seemed to have gathered new life, and to have a new fund of wit. Until the passing of the Stamp Act in August, 1712, when the price was necessarily raised, the circulation seems to have been nearly 4,000.

Among many other subjects Steele again wrote numerous excellent papers on the stage. There is the well-known account of Estcourt's death, and there are admirable criticisms. Of Etherege's popular play, *Sir Foppling Flutter*, he said that it was "a perfect contradiction to good manners, good sense, and common honesty"; and of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Scornful Lady*,

that no beauty would atone for the meanness of giving "a scandalous representation of what is reputable among men, that is to say, what is sacred." Elsewhere he remarked that "it is not to be imagined what effect a well-regulated stage would have upon men's manners," and that it is in the people themselves "to raise this entertainment to the greatest height."

Swift was now quite estranged from Addison and Steele, though of course they were civil when they met. In June, 1711, Steele appears to have become acquainted with Pope, and Addison wrote a flattering notice of the young poet's *Art of Criticism* in the *Spectator*. Party pamphleteering was now being carried to a hitherto unprecedented extent, and Swift wrote constantly himself, and supplied hints to others. Marlborough was dismissed, and the object of the Government was to bring the war to an end by persuading the people to agree to a treaty whose terms were less satisfactory than might have been expected. At the same time some of the party were secretly plotting for the restoration of the Stuarts, and among these appears to to have been Harley, now Earl of Oxford. Steele wrote a pamphlet in praise of Marlborough, for whom he always showed great admiration.

A son, Eugene, was born in March, 1712; Steele was then living in Brownlow Street, Holborn. In June he had a cottage on Haverstock Hill, and there the members of the Kitcat Club

called for him on their way to the Upper Flask at Hampstead, where they met in the summer. In July he had taken a house in Bloomsbury Square, and next month he felt relieved by the renewal of his employments, and lived "in the handsomest manner." But all the time actions for debt were hanging over him, and he had hastily to withdraw a scheme which was found to be illegal, for "getting money" by means of a "Multiplication Table," to be worked in connection with the State Lottery.

The *Spectator* was brought to a close in December, 1712, and in the following month George Berkeley, afterwards Bishop of Cloyne, but then a young man just arrived in London, wrote that Steele, who had been among the first to welcome him, was ill with gout, but was, "as I am informed, writing a play, since he gave over the *Spectators*." Steele was very hospitable to the young philosopher, and Berkeley remarks that there appeared "in his natural temper something very generous, and a great benevolence to mankind." By the death of Mrs. Scurlock, Steele had come into £500 a year, which made it more justifiable for him to maintain his "handsome and neatly furnished house," where the table, servants, coach, &c., were "very genteel."

A new periodical, *The Guardian*, was begun on March 12, 1713, and was issued daily until October. Steele wrote 82 of the 175 numbers, and Addison, Berkeley and Pope were among

the contributors. The periodical was written on the same lines as the *Spectator*, and many of the papers are excellent, but with the fortieth number Steele was drawn into a political quarrel with the *Examiner*, and the *Guardian* lost its value as literature. Politics ran so high that the representatives of each party applied to themselves the noble sentiments in Addison's tragedy, *Cato*, which was produced on April 14, and thus united in applauding the piece. Steele had undertaken to fill the house, and he wrote verses, afterwards prefixed to the play, in which he alluded to the fact that he had once inscribed Addison's name to his own "light scenes"; they, however, would soon die, and he therefore wished to "live, joined to a work of thine."

Attacks in the *Examiner* led Steele to complain of articles by "an estranged friend or an exasperated mistress," *i.e.* Swift or Mrs. Manley. Swift denied that he had at this time any hand in the *Examiner*, and a bitter quarrel arose between the two men. In June Steele resigned his position as Commissioner of the Stamp Office, and soon afterwards gave up his pension as a servant of the late Prince. On August 25 he was elected M.P. for the borough of Stockbridge, Hampshire. In the *Guardian* Steele had insisted that as one of the conditions of the peace the nation expected the demolition of Dunkirk; and this was dwelt upon at greater length in a pamphlet called *The Importance of*

Dunkirk considered. A storm of controversial literature followed these declarations, and, in October the *Guardian* gave place to the *Englishman*, which was devoted almost entirely to politics. Addison said he was "in a thousand troubles for poor Dick," and hoped that his zeal for the public would not be ruinous to himself. Swift wrote bitter attacks—*The Importance of the Guardian considered* and *The First Ode of the Second Book of Horace Paraphrased and addressed to Richard St——le, Esq.*, in the latter of which he suggested that when Steele had settled the affairs of Europe he might turn to Drury Lane, and produce the play with which he had long threatened the town, and which had for plot—

> "To make a pair of jolly fellows,
> The son and father, join to tell us
> How sons may safely disobey,
> And fathers never should say nay;
> By which wise conduct they grow friends
> At last—and so the story ends."

In January, 1714, Steele brought out *The Crisis*, a widely read pamphlet which set forth the facts relating to the Hanoverian Succession, and among the replies was Swift's *The Public Spirit of the Whigs*. Steele defended himself in the last number of the *Englishman*, and next day Parliament met, and Steele spoke in support of the motion that Sir Thomas Hanmer should be Speaker. Complaint was soon made that his writings were seditious, and, in spite of the aid of Walpole, Stanhope, Addison, and

others, a motion for his expulsion was carried by the Tory House, on March 18, after several debates. In the meantime, the Whig House of Lords had taken measures against the printer and publisher of Swift's *Public Spirit of the Whigs*, and had insisted upon a reward being offered for the discovery of the author.

About this time Steele produced short-lived periodicals called *The Lover* and *The Reader*, and several political pamphlets. Although £3,000 had been given him by some unknown friends, he was involved in money difficulties, and the house in Bloomsbury Square was given up. But with the end of July came the serious illness of Queen Anne, who died on August 1st. The hopes of Bolingbroke and others were thrown to the ground, and George I. was peacefully proclaimed king. Bothmar at once acquainted his royal master with Steele's services, and soon after the king's arrival in England Steele was made Deputy-Lieutenant for the County of Middlesex, Surveyor of the Royal Stables at Hampton Court, a Justice of the Peace, and Supervisor of the Theatre Royal. He found time to publish, in October, an important pamphlet, *Mr. Steele's Apology for Himself and his Writings*, and *The Ladies' Library*, a compilation which he had revised, and which contained an admirable Dedication to his wife, concluding thus: "But I offend; and forget that what I say to you is to appear in public. You

are so great a lover of home, that I know it will be irksome to you to go into the world even in an applause. I will end this without so much as mentioning your little flock, or your own amiable figure at the head of it. That I think them preferable to all other children, I know is the effect of passion and instinct. That I believe you to be the best of wives, I know proceeds from experience and reason."

VIII.

Until the death of the Queen, William Collier, M.P., who held a licence to act, in conjunction with Wilks, Cibber, Doggett, and Booth, had received a pension from those actors of £700 a year. At the accession of King George, as the pension could not be wholly got rid of, the four actors, as Colley Cibber tells us in his *Apology*, "imagined the merit of a Whig might now have as good a chance of getting into it, as that of a Tory had for being continued in it: having no obligations, therefore, to Collier, who had made the last penny of them, they applied themselves" to Steele, who had many pretensions to favour at Court. "We knew, too, the obligations the stage had to his writings; there being scarce a comedian of merit, in our whole company, whom his *Tatlers* had not made better by

his public recommendation of them. And many days had our House been particularly filled by the influence and credit of his pen. . . . We therefore begged him to use his interest for the renewal of our licence, and that he would do us the honour of getting our names to stand with his, in the same Commission. This, we told him, would put it still further into his power of supporting the stage in that reputation to which his Lucubrations had already so much contributed; and that therefore we thought no man had better pretences to partake of its success." Steele was, of course, delighted at the offer. "It surprised him into an acknowledgment, that people, who are shy of obligations, are cautious of confessing. His spirits took such a lively turn upon it, that had we been all his own sons, no unexpected act of filial duty could have more endeared us to him." A new licence, upon the first mention of it, was obtained by Steele of the King, through the Duke of Marlborough, "the hero of his heart," who was now again Captain-General. According to a memorandum of Steele's he received a message from the King, "to know whether I was in earnest in desiring the Playhouse or that others thought of it for me. If I liked it I should have it as an earnest of His future favour."

The prosperity of the early part of the season of 1714—5 was checked by a renewal of the licence to the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields

and by the desertion to that house of seven or eight actors. The other managers of Drury Lane Theatre found it necessary to point out to Steele that he stood in the same position as Collier, and that his pension of £700 was liable to the same conditions as Collier's, namely, that it was to be paid only so long as there was but one company allowed to act, and that if a second company were set up, the pension was to be changed from a fixed payment to an equal share of the profits. To this Steele at once agreed. "While we were offering to proceed," says Cibber, "Sir Richard stopped us short by assuring us, that as he came among us by our own invitation, he should always think himself obliged to come into any measures for our ease and service; that to be a burden to our industry would be more disagreeable to him than it could be to us, and as he had always taken a delight in his endeavours for our prosperity, he should be still ready, on our own terms, to continue them." Every one who knew Steele in his prosperity, Cibber remarks, "knew that this was his manner of dealing with his friends in business." Steele, however, told Cibber and the others that he was advised to get their licence during pleasure enlarged into a more durable authority, and with this object he proposed that he should obtain a Patent for himself, for his life and three years after, which he would then assign over to them. To this the managers were only too glad

to agree, for, among other benefits, it would free them from too great a dependency upon the Lord Chamberlain, or the officers under him, who, not having "the hearts of noblemen," often showed that insolence of office to which narrow minds are liable. Steele accordingly applied for a Patent, and his request was complied with on January 19, 1715. A week earlier he had received a gift of £500 from the King.

On the 20th of January, Steele left London for Boroughbridge, a place for which he was to be elected Member of Parliament on the 2nd of the following month. The Patent was only received on the 19th of January, and, therefore, as Cibber says, "We were forced that very night to draw up in a hurry (till our counsel might more advisably perfect it) his assignment to us of equal shares in the Patent, with farther conditions of partnership. . . . This assignment (which I had myself the hasty penning of) was so worded, that it gave Sir Richard as equal a title to our property as it had given us to his authority in the Patent. But Sir Richard, notwithstanding, when he returned to town, took no advantage of the mistake." Cibber adds that Steele's equity and honour proved as advantageous to himself as to them, for instead of £700, his income from the theatre, by his accepting a share instead of the fixed pension, was about £1,000 a year.

Steele was knighted, in company with two

other Deputy-Lieutenants, in April, and in May he celebrated the King's birthday by a grand entertainment in the great room at York Buildings. This room he called the "Censorium," and it was intended for select assemblies of two hundred persons, "leaders in politeness, wit, and learning." The undertaking appears to have been successful, and it was carried on for some time.

The *Englishman* was revived in July, with the object of making good the accusations which had been levelled long before against Oxford, Bolingbroke, and other members of the late Government. Steele appears to have asked for £1,000 a year before undertaking this work,[1] and from the fact that he continued the paper after threatening to drop it when the third number had been published, it would seem that he was paid at least £500 by Walpole. Soon afterwards he applied, but without success, for the vacant Mastership of the Charterhouse. Of Steele's various publications in 1715—6 it is impossible to speak here; it will be enough to notice that Addison's comedy, *The Drummer*, was published by Steele on March 21, 1716, with a preface in which he said that the play had for some years been in the hands of the author, who had been persuaded by him to allow of its representation on the stage. In June he was

[1] See a paper by the present writer in the *Athenæum* for Dec. 27, 1890, and the *Life of Steele*, ii. 72-3.

appointed one of the thirteen Commissioners who were to deal with the estates forfeited by noblemen and gentlemen, chiefly Scottish, who had taken up arms on the side of the Pretender during the late rising. The salary was £1,000 a year.

Money difficulties made it necessary, in July, 1716, for Steele to mortgage his interest in the theatre to an Edward Minshull, M.P., who had on previous occasions lent him money. In January, 1717, further money was raised upon Steele's share of the scenery, clothes, and profits. This led to much trouble, and ultimately to a Chancery action, in 1722, which is described in the Appendix. In that same year, Minshull, who was a gambler, was found guilty of fraud, but he succeeded in escaping to Holland.

Lady Steele went to Carmarthenshire in November, 1716, and remained there till the end of the following year. When she left London one of her children was sickening for the small-pox, and, according to her husband, there was not "an inch of candle, a pound of coal, or a bit of meat in the house." The little girl recovered, however, and money came in; and, during the following weeks, Steele wrote some charming letters about his "dear innocents," full of good resolves for the future, which did not meet with any very hearty response from his ailing wife. In one letter he spoke of turning all his thoughts to finish his comedy, but he also had great hopes from a "Fish-pool scheme," the object of which

was to bring fish alive to London. When his "dear little peevish, beautiful, wise governess" called him "good Dick," he said he was so enraptured that he could forget his miserable lameness—he was suffering from gout—and walk down to Wales.

After many delays, Steele set out, in October, to attend the meetings of the Forfeited Estates Commission at Edinburgh, where he was very well received. He was, however, soon back in London, and, in June, 1718, obtained Letters Patent for the Fish-pool, which was followed by much litigation on the part of a man named Sansome, who said he had rendered valuable aid in developing the scheme. In the autumn, Steele was again in Scotland, and in December he lost his "dear and honoured wife." She was buried in the south transept of Westminster Abbey.

The Peerage Bill was introduced by the Government in 1719, with a view of limiting the power of creating new peers. The real object was to prevent a growth of the influence either of king or people, in both of which the aristocratic Whigs saw danger to themselves. Steele did not agree on this question with the party leaders, and he was honest and bold enough to oppose their bill in a paper called the *Plebeian*. Addison replied in the *Old Whig*, and unfortunately the controversy led to the estrangement of the two friends. There was no opportunity

for reconciliation, for Addison died shortly after the appearance of these pamphlets. The Peerage Bill was revived in November, but was thrown out in December, immediately after the publication of another pamphlet by Steele.

The Government at once took steps to punish their candid friend. As early as 1717, the Duke of Newcastle, who then became Lord Chamberlain, had requested the managers of the theatre to accept a licence in place of their patent. This Steele declined to do, and the matter dropped; but in the following year there was further friction, owing to the claim of the managers that they were exempt from the Duke's authority. The Attorney-General was consulted on this point, and upon the question whether Steele had power to sell or alienate his interest in the patent; but the result is not recorded. The first act of revenge was an order, on December 19, 1719, forbidding Cibber—who had dedicated his *Ximena* to Steele—to act or take part in the management of the theatre. Steele remonstrated, and commenced an interesting periodical called the *Theatre*, in vindication of himself and his fellow-managers. On January 23, 1720, the licence was revoked, and the Lord Chamberlain threatened to obtain a sign manual to silence the theatre. Steele petitioned the King, but on the 25th a warrant was issued forbidding any acting at Drury Lane until further order. On the 27th a licence, to be held during pleasure,

was granted to Wilks, Cibber, and Booth; and on March 4, in spite of every effort of Steele's to obtain justice, the King's Company of Comedians were sworn at the office of the Lord Chamberlain, to whom they agreed to be subservient. Next month, in the last number of the *Theatre*, Steele alluded to the loss he had sustained in not being able to produce his own pieces advantageously, and stated that he would forthwith publish a new comedy, called *Sir John Edgar*. This agrees with letters from Dr. Rundle, who wrote that it was said that a most excellent comedy of Steele's was prevented being acted at the Haymarket Theatre, lest its wit and sense should spoil the relish for operas. This comedy, however, never saw the light.

Throughout 1720 the country was occupied with the fortunes of the South Sea Company and other schemes, by which people hoped to make rapid fortunes. Steele, both in and out of the House, again opposed the action of ministers, and his conduct was justified in the autumn, when the bubble burst. Aislabie, the elder Craggs, the Stanhopes, and Sunderland were all compromised; and Walpole became First Lord of the Treasury. Steele, as in the case of the 1715 Rebellion, advocated mercy towards the directors of the company as individuals, though he had fearlessly condemned their action while they had the power of doing harm. On the 2nd of May, 1721, through Walpole's influence, the

Lord Chamberlain issued a warrant, ordering the managers of the theatre to account to Steele for his share of the profits, past and future. In the autumn he was again in Scotland.

Articles quadrupartite were entered into on September 19, between Steele, Wilks, Cibber, and Booth, by which it was agreed that Steele's executors should, for three years after his death, receive one-fourth part of the profits of the theatre, and should also have, at his death, £1,200 for his share in the patent, clothes, scenery, &c. Further articles were also signed, which had for their object the protection of the actors in case Steele were again deprived by order of the King or Lord Chamberlain of his interest in the theatre. These agreements did not prevent Steele having difficulty in getting from the other managers his share of the profits, though he had already given them £400 each, in consideration, as they said, of a fourth part of the scenery, &c., which belonged to them. At the close of the year Steele republished *The Drummer*, which had not been included by Tickell in the collected edition of Addison's works, and prefixed to it a vindication of himself from charges made by the editor. In March, 1722, he became Member of Parliament for Wendover.

IX.

As early as 1720 Steele spoke in the *Theatre* of "a friend of mine" who was lately preparing a comedy according to the just laws of the stage, and had introduced a scene in which the first character bore unprovoked wrong, denied a duel, and still appeared a man of honour and courage. This was clearly an allusion to the play eventually to be published as *The Conscious Lovers*. And in a paragraph in Mist's *Weekly Journal* for November 18, 1721, printed a year before the play appeared, readers were informed that "Sir Richard Steele proposes to represent a character upon the stage this season that was never seen there yet: His *Gentleman* has been two years a dressing, and we wish he may make a good appearance at last." In June, 1722, Vanbrugh, in a letter to Tonson, lamented the absence of new plays of any value. "Steele, however," he said, "has one to come on at winter, which they much commend." On September 22 the *British Journal* stated that a considerable number of new plays were promised at Drury Lane that season, and that Steele's new comedy would be set up immediately after Mrs. Centlivre's *The Artifice*. In October the newspapers announced that Steele's play would be called *The Unfashionable Lovers*, or as others said, *The Fine Gentleman*. When the

play was produced, on November 7th, the title chosen was *The Conscious Lovers*.

Mrs. Oldfield, Mrs. Younger, Booth, Wilks, and Cibber took the principal parts in what was, in many respects, Steele's best play, and Benjamin Victor says that the author, with whom he sat at the first performance, was charmed with all the actors except Griffin, who represented Cimberton, a very ungrateful part. The play ran for eighteen nights, which at that time meant a great success, and there were eight further performances during the season. It was published in December,[1] with a dedication to the King, for which Steele appears to have received five hundred guineas.

In the Preface the success of the play was attributed to the excellent manner in which every part was acted; for a play is meant to be seen, not read. "The chief design of this was to be an innocent performance, and the audience have abundantly showed how ready they are to support what is visibly intended that way; nor do I make any difficulty to acknowledge that the whole was writ for the sake of the scene of the fourth act, wherein Mr Bevil evades the quarrel with his friend; and hope it may have some effect upon the Goths and Vandals that frequent

[1] Tonson paid for the copyright £40, "and other valuable considerations"; and he had to institute proceedings to prevent the play being pirated (*Athenæum*, Dec. 5, 1891). As early as March 1, 1772, Lintot has agreed to give Tonson £70 for a half share of Steele's comedy that was to be published.

the theatres, or a more polite audience may supply their absence." The general idea of the play was taken from Terence's *Andria*, but after the first two acts Steele's indebtedness to Terence is very slight. Cibber, however, rendered valuable assistance. "Mr. Cibber's zeal for the work," wrote Steele, "his care and application in instructing the actors, and altering the dispositions of the scenes, when I was, through sickness, unable to cultivate such things myself, has been a very obliging favour and friendship to me." Theophilus Cibber, who had a part in the original cast, says that when Steele finished the comedy, the parts of Tom and Phillis were not in it, and that Colley Cibber, when he heard it read, said he liked it upon the whole, but that it was rather too grave for an English audience, who think the end of a comedy is to make them laugh. Steele thereupon agreed to the introduction of some comic characters, and at his request the play received many additions by Cibber. The piece was, as Victor says, "the last blaze of Sir Richard's glory"; and it is probable that Cibber deserves all the thanks Steele gave him for preparing for the stage the manuscript which had for so long been in preparation, and which, without assistance, might never have been completed. It is difficult, however, to accept Theophilus Cibber's account in its entirety, because the germ of the delightful scene in which Tom, the gentleman's gentleman, describes how he

fell in love with Phillis, is to be found in No. 87 of the *Guardian*, where Steele says he had in mind a scene which he had recently observed while passing a house. This is the form which the story ultimately took:—

Tom. Ah! Too well I remember when, and how, and on what occasion I was first surprised. It was on the first of April, one thousand seven hundred and fifteen, I came into Mr. Sealand's service; I was then a hobbledehoy, and you a pretty little tight girl, a favourite handmaid of the housekeeper. At that time we neither of us knew what was in us: I remember I was ordered to get out of the window, one pair of stairs, to rub the sashes clean; the person employed on the inner side was your charming self, whom I had never seen before.

Phillis. I think I remember the silly accident: What made ye, you oaf, ready to fall down into the street?

Tom. You know not, I warrant you—You could not guess what surprised me. You took no delight, when you immediately grew wanton, in your conquest, and put your lips close, and breathed upon the glass, and when my lips approached, a dirty cloth you rubbed against my face, and hid your beauteous form; when I again drew near, you spit, and rubbed, and smiled at my undoing.

Phillis. What silly thoughts you men have!

Tom. . . . . Oh, Phillis! Phillis! shorten my torment and declare you pity me.

Phillis. I believe it's very sufferable; the pain is not so exquisite but that you may bear it a little longer.

"If I were rich," said Phillis in another place, I could twire and loll as well as the best of them. Oh, Tom! Tom! Is it not a pity that you should be so great a coxcomb, and I so great a coquette, and yet be such poor devils as we are?"

The names of some of the characters recall earlier writings, for Lucinda and her father, Mr. Sealand, Mr. Charles Myrtle, and Humphrey, the servant, had all appeared in the *Theatre*, while there was another Myrtle in the *Lover*. There are,

too, passages which at once remind us of the style of the earlier periodicals; thus Bevil, after escorting a music-master to the door, says to Indiana, "You smile, madam, to see me so complaisant to one whom I pay for his visit: Now, I own, I think it is not enough barely to pay those whose talents are superior to our own (I mean such talents as would become our condition, if we had them). Methinks we ought to do something more than barely gratify them for what they do at our command, only because their fortune is below us"; to which Indiana replies, "You said, I smile; I assure you it was a smile of approbation; for, indeed, I cannot but think it the distinguishing part of a gentleman to make his superiority of fortune as easy to his inferiors as he can." Or, to take another passage in the conversation of these same "conscious lovers," Bevil remarks, "If pleasure be worth purchasing, how great a pleasure is it to him, who has a true taste of life, to ease an aching heart, to see the human countenance lighted up with smiles of joy on receipt of a bit of ore which is superfluous and otherwise useless in a man's own pocket." He even remembers to praise Addison: "The moral writers practise virtue after death: This charming Vision of Mirza! Such an author consulted in a morning sets the spirit for the vicissitudes of the day better than the glass does a man's person." And when Sir John Bevil observes that, "What

might injure a citizen's credit may be no strain to a gentleman's honour," Mr. Sealand says, "Sir John, the honour of a gentleman is liable to be tainted by as small a matter as the credit of a trader." Much the same lesson is taught, less sententiously, when Phillis exclaims, "Oh, Tom! Tom! thou art as false and as base as the best gentleman of them all."

Parson Adams said that he thought *The Conscious Lovers* the only play fit for a Christian to see; indeed," he added, "it contains some things almost solemn enough for a sermon." In this kindly satire Fielding indicated the weakness of the play. The chief interest of the piece is sentimental, and the hero is not always free from priggishness. Yet the duelling scene, for which, as Steele says, the whole was written, has much dramatic interest, and the protest against false ideas of honour—"decisions a tyrant custom has introduced, to the breach of all laws both divine and human"—was at that time courageous, and much needed. If some of the things expressed in this play are more suited for a paper in the *Spectator*, there is nothing in true comedy which makes it incongruous to convey, in a manner suited to that form of art, s serious lesson of life. If, again, as some say, there is more pathos than is allowable in the scene in which Sealand recovers his long-lost daughter and sister, the end is that of true comedy; the "pedantic coxcomb" Cimberton no longer wants Sealand's

daughter when he finds that, by the discovery of Indiana, Lucinda's fortune will be halved; Bevil is able, in marrying Indiana, the lady he loves, to comply with his father's wish that he should be united to Sealand's daughter; and Bevil's friend, Myrtle, the true lover whose affection is not lessened by change in the lady's dowry, is rewarded with the hand of Lucinda. The friends, formerly supposed by one of them to be rivals, thus become brothers.

Steele alluded to current criticism when he said, in his Preface, that the incident of the threatened duel and the case of the father and daughter were thought by some to be no subjects of comedy; "but I cannot," he continued, "be of their mind, for anything that has its foundation in happiness and success must be allowed to be the object of comedy." His object, as Welsted said in the Prologue, was to

> "please by wit that scorns the aid of vice;
> The praise he seeks, from worthier motives springs,
> Such praise, as praise to those that give, it brings."

It was for the audience

> "To chasten wit, and moralise the stage."

If success is to be measured by the amount of discussion caused by a work, *The Conscious Lovers* was, indeed, fortunate. Dennis began the attack in a pamphlet before the play was publicly acted, and afterwards returned to the charge. Much of what he said was personal abuse, but some of his remarks are interesting, and show what were

then held to be the weak points in the piece. He complained that Bevil was given the qualities of an old man, and maintained that the characters were not just images of their contemporaries, that patterns for imitation were set up instead of follies and vices being made ridiculous, and that the subject of the comedy was not by its constitution comical. Bevil's filial piety, he said, was carried too far, and his behaviour to Indiana was still more unaccountable, for though he had in one sense concealed his passion, there was no retreat with honour for him, because by his generosity and constant visits he had raised a passion for him in Indiana, and had compromised her. The catastrophe, he confessed, was very moving, but it might have been more surprising, if handled differently. The action in Terence's play was natural, as, for example, the conduct of Glycerium at the funeral of Chrysis; but the scene at the masquerade between Bevil and Indiana was an absurd imitation, for Indiana did not know that her affection was returned. As for Bevil, "this man of conscience and of religion is as arrant an hypocrite as a certain author," and was constantly dissimulating. Dennis concluded by saying that the sentiments were often frivolous, false, and absurd; the dialogue awkward, clumsy, and spiritless; the diction affected, barbarous, and too often Hibernian.

There were other pamphlets for and against the play, and the newspapers contained many

articles on the subject. One writer remarked that a great part of Squire Cimberton's conversation, "some of which has since been omitted," could not be reconciled with rules often laid down by Steele. "He [Steele] must always be agreeable, till he ceases to be at all; and yet . . . it has been always fashionable to use him ill: Blockheads of quality, who are scarce capable of reading his works, have affected a sort of ill-bred merit in despising 'em; and they who have no taste for his writings, have pretended to a displeasure at his conduct."

X.

The remaining years of Steele's life need not detain us long. In 1723 he wrote to his eldest daughter, Betty, "I have taken a great deal of pains to serve the world, and hope God will allow me some time to serve my own family. My good girl, employ yourself always in some good work, that you may be as good a woman as your mother." A few days later Vanbrugh wrote, "Happening to meet with Sir Richard Steele t'other day at Mr. Walpole's in town, he seemed to me to be (at least) in the declining way I had heard he was." The complications arising from the mortgage of Steele's interest in the theatre still troubled him, and from the 18th of June the

other managers each took, for his own use, £1 13s. 4d. for every day upon which a play was acted, an arrangement from which Steele was excluded.

The success of *The Conscious Lovers* encouraged Steele to endeavour to finish another play; and the newspapers reported that it would be acted that winter. This was *The School of Action*, which has for its scene a theatre, mistaken by a lady's guardian for an inn; but the piece was left in a very incomplete condition. There is also a fragment of another play, *The Gentleman;* it was a dramatised version of a paper in the *Spectator* upon high life below stairs. In September illness forced Steele to go to Bath, and a few weeks later his only surviving son, Eugene, died. "Lord, grant me patience; pray write to me constantly," the father wrote to Betty: "Why don't you mention Molly? Is she dead, too?" In the spring of 1724 he was again in London, and in April a proposal for the payment of his debts was drawn up, from which it appears that, as he lived for more than five years afterwards, his liabilities were probably all met before his death. There was again reference to "a new play, which Sir Richard may produce next winter." In June an indenture quadripartite was made between Steele, of the first part; Wilks, Cibber, and Booth, of the second part; a number of creditors, of the third part; and the Rev. David Scurlock, of the fourth part, to provide for the

payment of debts out of Steele's share of the profits of the theatre. For this purpose Mr. Scurlock—Lady Steele's cousin—was appointed trustee.

The autumn of 1724 was spent at Carmarthen. In February, 1725, Steele was at Hereford, where he received £100 from the King's bounty; and in July he was again at Carmarthen. He retired to the country from "a principle of doing justice to his creditors," and not, as Swift said after his death, because of the "perils of a hundred gaols." In December, 1724, the other managers urged him to return to town at once; the audiences decreased daily, and it was impossible to contend against other forms of entertainment; the profits had fallen by more than a half. Nothing came of this application, and in September, 1725, protracted law proceedings were instituted in the Court of Chancery, by Steele and Scurlock, against Wilks, Cibber, Booth, Castleman, and Woolley. An abstract of the pleadings will be found in the Appendix. The Court gave judgment in February, 1728, confirming the allowance of £1 13s. 4d. a day to each of the three managers; but the case was not brought to a close until July, when, as Cibber says, "Sir Richard not being advised to appeal to the Lord Chancellor, both parties paid their own costs, and thought it their mutual interest to let this be the last of their law suits."

During the remaining three years of his life

Steele lived chiefly at Tygwyn, a farm-house overlooking the Towy, and within sight of Carmarthen. There he had a stroke of paralysis, which was accompanied by a partial loss of speech, but he kept his sweetness of temper and kindliness towards others to the last. There is a pleasant anecdote, told by Victor, and fully confirmed elsewhere, that he "would often be carried out on a summer's evening, where the country lads and lasses were assembled at their rural sports, and, with his pencil, give an order on his agent, the mercer, for a new gown to the best dancer." By his will, made in 1727, and witnessed by John Dyer, the poet, he left the residue of his small property, after certain legacies, to his "dear and well-beloved daughters, Elizabeth and Mary." Elizabeth, who had many admirers, afterwards married Lord Trevor; Mary died shortly after her father. Before his death Steele was moved to a house in King Street, Carmarthen, where he passed away on September 1, 1729. On the 4th he was privately buried in the vault of the Scurlocks, in St. Peter's Church. This vault was accidentally opened in 1876, and Steele's remains exposed to view; but they were carefully re-interred, and the skull enclosed in a small lead coffin.

Steele's faults are apparent, and they have not been allowed to be forgotten by writers of his own day or of later times. That he was thriftless is manifest, but his income, though it came

from various sources, was uncertain and irregular, and he had passed the prime of life before he had anything like handsome means. Many of his debts, too, are to be accounted for by the generosity and open-handedness which are a characteristic of the nation in which he was born. That he sometimes drank more than was wise is equally well known, but that fault does not strike us so much when we remember that hard drinking was then the common practice, and that many could consume, with impunity, an amount which would undoubtedly have upset Steele entirely.

Against these defects, and a certain general weakness of character to which they were due, we have to set his unselfish patriotism, the high aims of his writings, which had a most beneficial effect upon his own and future generations, his affection for wife and children, and his loyalty to his friends. Whatever there is to forgive is more than made up for by these qualities, which have made him, to this day, one of the best-loved characters of his time.

Steele's comedies were often reprinted in separate form during the century following their production, and there were about a dozen editions in which these separate plays were collected together, with a general title-page. The last of these bears the date 1761. In 1809 Nichols published the fragments of two unfinished comedies in his edition of Steele's Cor-

respondence. In the present volume all Steele's dramatic works have for the first time been gathered together, and an attempt has been made to provide such annotation as seemed necessary. Changes of scene, sometimes not noticed in the old copies, have been indicated, and modern conventions respecting spelling and the like have been adopted, while punctuation, which was very erratic in the early issues, has, where necessary, been modified. The text has been collated with the first and later editions of each play.

G. A. AITKEN.

THE FUNERAL:

OR

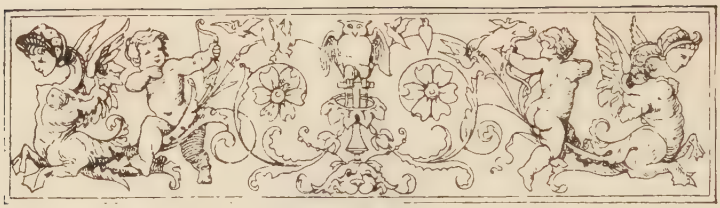
GRIEF À-LA-MODE.

" Ut qui conducti plorant in funere, dicunt,
Et faciunt propè plura dolentibus ex animo, sic
Derisor vero plus laudatore movetur." [1]

HORACE, *Ars. Poet*, 431—3.

[1] " Hired mourners at a funeral say and do
A little more than they whose grief is true;
'Tis just so here: false flattery displays
More show of sympathy than honest praise."

CONINGTON.



THE *Funeral: or, Grief à-la-Mode*, a Comedy, was written in the summer of 1701, and given to Christopher Rich, of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in October. Soon afterwards it was acted, and it was published by Jacob Tonson between December 18 and 20, with the date 1702 on the title-page. The music to the songs, by William Croft, appeared between December 16 and 18. The original cast included Cibber (Lord Hardy), Wilks (Campley), Mills (Trusty), Pinkethman (Trim), Norris (Mrs. Fardingale), and Bullock (Kate Matchlock); with Mrs. Verbruggen (Lady Brumpton), Mrs. Rogers (Lady Harriot), and Mrs. Oldfield (Lady Sharlot). The play was revived occasionally in most of the years between 1703 and 1734, and from time to time during the following half-century, the last date, apparently, being April 17, 1799. The plot is entirely original.

To the Right Honourable the

COUNTESS OF ALBEMARLE.[1]

MADAM,

AMONG the many novelties with which your ladyship, a stranger in our nation, is daily entertained, you have not yet been made acquainted with the poetical English liberty, the right of dedication; which entitles us to a privilege of celebrating whatever for its native excellence is the just object of praise, and is an ancient charter, by which the Muses have always a free access to the habitation of the Graces.

Hence it is that this Comedy waits on your Ladyship, and presumes to welcome you amongst us; though indeed, madam, we are surprised to see you bring with you, what we thought was of our own growth only, an agreeable beauty; nay, we must assure you, that we cannot give up so dear an article of our glory, but assert it by our right in you: for if 't is a maxim founded on the noblest human law, that of hospitality, that every soil is a brave man's country, England has a very just pretence of claiming as a native a daughter of Mr. Scravenmore.

[1] Isabella, second daughter of the Lord of St. Gravemoer, General of the Forces to the States General, and wife of Arnold Joost van Keppel, Earl of Albemarle, and Colonel of the first troop of Horse Guards.

But your Ladyship is not only endeared to us by the great services of your father, but also by the kind offices of your husband, whose frank carriage falls in with our genius, which is free, open, and unreserved. In this the generosity of your tempers makes you both excel in so peculiar a manner, that your good actions are their own reward; nor can they be returned with ingratitude, for none can forget the benefits you confer so soon as you do yourselves.

But ye have a more indisputable title to a dramatic performance than all these advantages; for you are yourselves, in a degenerate low age, the noblest characters which that fine passion that supports the stage has inspired; and as you have practised as generous a fidelity as the fancies of poets have ever drawn in their expecting lovers, so may you enjoy as high a prosperity as ever they have bestowed on their rewarded. This you may possess in an happy security, for your fortunes cannot move so much envy as your persons love.

I am, Madam,

Your Ladyship's most devoted

Humble Servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

PREFACE.

THE rehearsal of this Comedy was honoured with the presence of the Duke of Devonshire,[1] who is as distinguished by his fine understanding as high quality. The innocence of it moved him to the humanity of expressing himself in its favour. 'Tis his manner to be pleased where he is not offended; a condescension which delicate spirits are obliged to for their own ease, for they would have but a very ill time of it if they suffered themselves to be diverted with nothing but what could bear their judgment.

That elegant and illustrious person will, I hope, pardon my gratitude to the town, which obliges me to report so substantial a reason for their approbation of this play, as that he permitted it. But I know not in what words to thank my fellow-soldiers for their warmth and zeal in my behalf, nor to what to attribute their undeserved favour, except it be that 'tis habitual to 'em to run to the succour of those they see in danger.

The subject of the drama 'tis hoped will be acceptable to all lovers of mankind, since ridicule is partly levelled

[1] William Cavendish, fourth Earl of Devonshire; created in 1694 Marquis of Hartington and Duke of Devonshire. The Duke was a Knight of the Garter, and Lord Steward of the Household. He married Mary, second daughter of the first Duke of Ormond, and he died in 1707.

at a set of people who live in impatient hopes to see us out of the world, a flock of ravens that attend this numerous city for their carcases; but, indeed, 'tis not in the power of any pen to speak 'em better than they do themselves. As, for example, on a door I just now passed by, a great artist thus informs us of his cures upon the dead :—

W. W., known and approved for his art of embalming, having preserved the corpse of a gentlewoman, sweet and entire, thirteen years, without embowelling, and has reduced the bodies of several persons of quality to sweetness, in Flanders and Ireland, after nine months' putrefaction in the ground, and they were known by their friends in England. No man performeth the like.

He must needs be strangely in love with this life who is not touched with this kind invitation to be pickled; and the noble operator must be allowed a very useful person for bringing old friends together; nor would it be unworthy his labour to give us an account at large of the sweet conversation that arose upon meeting such an entire friend as he mentions.

But to be serious: Is there anything, but its being downright fact, could make a rational creature believe 't were possible to arrive at this fantastic posthumous folly? Not at the same time but that it were buffoonery rather than satire to explode all funeral honours; but then it is certainly necessary to make 'em such that the mourners should be in earnest, and the lamented worthy of our sorrow. But this purpose is so far from being served, that it is utterly destroyed by the manner of proceeding among us, where the obsequies, which are due only to the best and highest of human race (to admonish their short survivors that neither wit, nor valour, nor wisdom, nor glory can suspend our fate), are prostituted and bestowed upon such as have nothing in common with men but their mortality.

But the dead man is not to pass off so easily, for his last thoughts are also to suffer dissection, and it seems there is an art to be earned to speak our own sense in

other men's words, and a man in a gown that never saw his face shall tell you immediately the design of the deceased, better than all his old acquaintance; which is so perfect an hocus-pocus that, without you can repeat such and such words, you cannot convey what is in your hands into another's; but far be it from any man's thought to say there are not men of strict integrity of the long robe, though it is not everybody's good fortune to meet with 'em.

However, the daily legal villanies we see committed will also be esteemed things proper to be prosecuted by satire, nor could our ensuing Legislative do their country a more seasonable office than to look into the distresses of an unhappy people, who groan perhaps in as much misery under entangled as they could do under broken laws; nor could there be a reward high enough assigned for a great genius, if such may be found, who has capacity sufficient to glance through the false colours that are put upon us, and propose to the English world a method of making justice flow in an uninterrupted stream; there is so clear a mind in being, whom we will name in words that of all men breathing can be only said of him; 'tis he [1] that is excellent—

> "Seu linguam causis acuit, seu civica jura
> Responsare parat, seu condit amabile carmen." [2]

Other enemies that may arise against this poor play are indeed less terrible, but much more powerful than these, and they are the ladies; but if there is anything that argues a soured man, who lashes all for Lady Brumpton, we may hope there will be seen also a devoted heart that esteems all for Lady Sharlot.

---

[1] Perhaps the reference is to Charles Montagu, Lord Halifax, who, as Pope says, was "fed with dedications."

[2] "Whether he trains for pleading, or essays
To practise law, or frame some graceful lays."

(Conington's *Horace*, Ep. I. iii. 23—4, adapted to suit Steele's modification of the original.)

PROLOGUE

Spoken by MR. WILKS.[1]

Nature's deserted, and dramatic art,
To dazzle now the eye, has left the heart;[2]
Gay lights and dresses, long extended scenes,
Demons and angels moving in machines,
All that can now, or please, or fright the fair,
May be performed without a writer's care,
And is the skill of carpenter, not player.

[1] Wilks was CAMPLEY. In the *Tatler* (No. 182), Steele says: "To beseech gracefully, to approach respectfully, to pity, to mourn, to love, are the places wherein Wilks may be said to shine with the utmost beauty!" He had "a singular talent in representing the graces of nature" and "the easy frankness of a gentleman."

[2] Contemporary writers loudly complained of the neglect of ordinary plays at this time, owing to the importation of French tumblers and rope-dancers, performing animals, and Italian singers. "The town ran mad," says Gildon (*Comparison between the two Stages*), after some of these entertainments. The theatres in Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields tried to outdo each other in every new attempt made by either of them. The "Celebrated Virgin," in a machine, shining in a full zodiac, and "Harlequin and Scaramouch," with plenty of grimaces and table-jumping, were favourite amusements. The cleverest plays would rarely secure a reasonable audience unless they were accompanied by dances, songs, and clowns. Colley Cibber (*Apology*, chap. x), says that Rich paid "extraordinary prices to singers, dancers, and other exotic performers, which were as constantly deducted out of the sinking salaries of his actors." The majority of the people "could more easily apprehend anything they *saw*, than the daintiest things that could be said to them." Rich was only prevented bringing an elephant on to the stage by "the jealousy which so formidable a rival had raised in his dancers," and by the bricklayers assuring him that the safety of the building would be imperilled. The complaint that what pleases is "the skill of carpenter, not player," is exactly what we hear continually at the present day.

Old Shakespeare's days could not thus far advance;
But what's his buskin to our ladder dance?[1]
In the mid region a silk youth to stand,
With that unwieldly engine at command!
Gorged with intemperate meals while here you sit,
Well may you take activity for wit:
Fie, let confusion on such dulness seize;
Blush, you're so pleased, as we that so we please.
But we, still kind to your inverted sense,
Do most unnatural things once more dispense.
For since you're still preposterous in delight,
Our Author made, a full house to invite,
A funeral a Comedy to night.
Nor does he fear that you will take the hint,
And let the funeral his own be meant;
No, in old England nothing can be won
Without a faction, good or ill be done;
To own this our frank Author does not fear;
But hopes for a prevailing party here;
He knows he 's numerous friends; nay, knows they'll
show it,
And for the fellow-soldier, save the poet.

[1] An Order of the Lord Chamberlain to the Managers of the Haymarket and Drury Lane Theatres, dated 24 Dec., 1709, directed that all agreements with actors, &c., were to be submitted to the Lord Chamberlain; that all players were to be sworn in; that all new plays, &c., were to be re-licensed by the Master of the Revels; and "that from and after the first day of January next no new Representations be brought upon the Stage which are not Necessary to the better performance of Comedy or Opera, such as ladder-dancing, antic postures, &c., without my leave and approbation first had." (Lord Chamberlain's Records, Warrant Book No. 22, end). See *Tatler*, Nos. 12, 99. The author of a book called *The Antient and Modern Stages surveyed* (1699), attributed to Dr. James Drake, and written in reply to Collier's *Short View*, says (p. 99): "As for the dancing, which he calls bold, it may in one sense be allowed him; for it must be granted that he that ventures his neck to dance upon the top of a ladder is a very bold fellow."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD BRUMPTON.

LORD HARDY, Son to LORD BRUMPTON, in love with LADY SHARLOT.

Mr. CAMPLEY, in love with LADY HARRIOT.

Mr. TRUSTY, Steward to LORD BRUMPTON.

CABINET.

Mr. SABLE, an Undertaker.

PUZZLE, a Lawyer.

TRIM, Servant to LORD HARDY.

TOM, the Lawyer's Clerk.

LADY BRUMPTON.

LADY SHARLOT, LADY HARRIOT } Orphan Sisters, left in ward to LORD BRUMPTON.

Madamoiselle D'EPINGLE.

TATTLEAID, LADY BRUMPTON'S Woman.

Mrs. FARDINGALE.

KATE MATCHLOCK.

Visitant Ladies, SABLE'S Servants, Recruits, &c.

SCENE.—COVENT GARDEN.

THE FUNERAL:

OR

GRIEF À-LA-MODE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE—*Covent Garden.*

Enter CABINET, SABLE, *and* CAMPLEY.

CAB. I burst into laughter, I can't bear to see writ over an undertaker's door, "Dresses for the Dead, and Necessaries for Funerals!" Ha! ha! ha!

Sab. Well, gentlemen, 'tis very well; I know you are of the laughers, the wits that take the liberty to deride all things that are magnificent and solemn.

Cam. Nay, but after all, I can't but admire Sable's nice discerning on the superfluous cares of mankind, that could lead them to the thought of raising an estate by providing horses, equipage, and furniture, for those that no longer need 'em.

Cab. But is it not strangely contradictory, that men

can come to so open, so apparent an hypocrisy, as in the face of all the world, to hire professed mourners to grieve, lament, and follow in their stead their nearest relations, and suborn others to do by art what they themselves should be prompted to by nature?

Sab. That's reasonably enough said, but they regard themselves only in all they act for the deceased, and the poor dead are delivered to my custody, to be embalmed, slashed, cut, and dragged about, not to do them honour, but to satisfy the vanity or interest of their survivors.

Cam. This fellow's every way an undertaker! How well and luckily he talks! His prating so aptly has methinks something more ridiculous in it than if he were absurd. [*Aside to* CABINET.

Cab. But, as Mr. Campley says, how could you dream of making a fortune from so chimerical a foundation as the provision of things wholly needless and insignificant?

Sab. Alas, gentlemen, the value of all things under the sun is merely fantastic. We run, we strive, and purchase things with our blood and money, quite foreign to our intrinsic real happiness, and which have a being in imagination only, as you may see by the pudder[1] that is made about precedence, titles, court favour, maidenheads, and china-ware.

Cam. Ay, Mr. Sable, but all those are objects that promote our joy, are bright to the eye, or stamp upon our minds pleasure and self-satisfaction.

Sab. You are extremely mistaken, sir; for one would wonder to consider that after all our outcries against self-interested men, there are few, very few, in the whole world that live to themselves, but sacrifice their bosom-bliss to enjoy a vain show, and appearance of prosperity in the eyes of others; and there is often nothing more inwardly distressed than a young bride in her glittering retinue, or deeply joyful than a young widow in her weeds and black

[1] Pother.

train; of both which, the lady of this house may be an instance, for she has been the one, and is, I'll be sworn, the other.

Cab. You talk, Mr. Sable, most learnedly!

Sab. I have the deepest learning, sir, experience. Remember your widow cousin that married last month.

Cab. Ay! But how could you imagine she was in all that grief an hypocrite? Could all those shrieks, those swoonings, that rising, falling bosom be constrained? You're uncharitable, Sable, to believe it—— What colour, what reason had you for it?

Sab. First, sir, her carriage in her concerns with me, for I never yet could meet with a sorrowful relict, but was herself enough to make an hard bargain with me.[1]— Yet I must confess they have frequent interruptions of grief and sorrow when they read my bill—but as for her, nothing, she resolved, that looked bright or joyous should after her love's death approach her. All her servants that were not coal black must turn out; a fair complexion made her eyes and heart ache, she'd none but downright jet, and to exceed all example she hired my mourning furniture by the year, and in case of my mortality tied my son to the same article; so in six weeks' time ran away with a young fellow—— Prithee push on briskly, Mr. Cabinet, now is your time to have this widow, for Tattleaid tells me she always said she'd never marry——

Cab. As you say, that's generally the most hopeful sign.

Sab. I tell you, sir, 'tis an infallible one; you know

[1] In a letter written in August, 1710, to her future husband, Mr. E. Wortley Montagu, Lady Mary Pierrepoint says: "People talk of being in love just as widows do of affliction. Mr. Steele has observed in one of his plays, 'the most passionate among them have always calmness enough to drive a hard bargain with the upholders.' I never knew a lover that would not willingly secure his interest as well as his mistress; or, if one must be abandoned, had not the prudence (among all his distractions) to consider that a woman was but a woman, and money was a thing of more real merit than the whole sex put together."

those professions are only to introduce discourse of matrimony and young fellows.

Cab. But I swear I could not have confidence even after all our long acquaintance, and the mutual love which his lordship (who indeed has now been so kind as to leave us) has so long interrupted, to mention a thing of such a nature so unseasonably——

Sab. Unseasonably! Why, I tell you 'tis the only season (granting her sorrow unfeigned): When would you speak of passion, but in the midst of passions? There's a what d'ye call, a crisis[1]—the lucky minute that's so talked of, is a moment between joy and grief, which you must take hold of and push your fortune—— But get you in, and you'll best read your fate in the reception Mrs. Tattleaid gives you. All she says, and all she does, nay, her very love and hatred are mere repetition of her ladyship's passions. I'll say that for her, she's a true lady's woman, and is herself as much a second-hand thing as her clothes. But I must beg your pardon, gentlemen, my people are come I see——

[*Exeunt* CAB. *and* CAMP.

Enter SABLE'S *Men.*

Where in the name of goodness have you all been? Have you brought the sawdust and tar for embalming? Have you the hangings and the sixpenny nails, and my lord's coat-of-arms?

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Yes, sir, and had come sooner, but I went to the Herald's for a coat for Alderman Gathergrease that died last night—— He has promised to invent one against to-morrow.

Sab. Ah! Pox take some of our cits, the first thing after their death is to take care of their birth—— Pox,

[1] See p. 91, note.

let him bear a pair of stockings, he's the first of his family that ever wore one. Well, come you that are to be mourners in this house, put on your sad looks, and walk by me that I may sort you. Ha, you! a little more upon the dismal [*forming their countenances*]; this fellow has a good mortal look—place him near the corpse. That wainscot face must be o'top of the stairs; that fellow's almost in a fright (that looks as if he were full of some strange misery) at the entrance of the hall—so—but I'll fix you all myself—— Let's have no laughing now on any provocation [*makes faces*]. Look yonder, that hale, well-looking puppy! You ungrateful scoundrel, did not I pity you, take you out of a great man's service, and show you the pleasure of receiving wages? Did not I give you ten, then fifteen, now twenty shillings a week, to be sorrowful? and the more I give you, I think, the gladder you are.

Enter a BOY.

Boy. Sir, the gravedigger of St. Timothy's-in-the-Fields would speak with you.

Sab. Let him come in.

Enter GRAVEDIGGER.

Grav. I carried home to your house the shroud the gentleman was buried in last night. I could not get his ring off very easily, therefore I brought the finger and all; and sir, the sexton gives his service to you, and desires to know whether you'd have any bodies removed or not. If not, he'll let 'em lie in their graves a week longer.

Sab. Give him my service, I can't tell readily; but our friend, tell him, Dr. Passeport, with the powder, has promised me six or seven funerals this week. I'll send to our country-farm at Kensington Gravel Pits, and our City-house in Warwick Lane for news; you shall know time enough. Harkee, be sure there's care taken to give my

Lady Languishe's woman a fee to keep out that young fellow came last from Oxford; he'll ruin us all.

Enter GOODY TRASH.

I wonder, Goody Trash, you could not be more punctual, when I told you I wanted you, and your two daughters, to be three virgins to-night to stand in white about my Lady Katherine Grissel's body; and you know you were privately to bring her home from the man-midwife's, where she died in childbirth, to be buried like a maid; but there is nothing minded. Well, I have put off that till to-morrow; go and get your bag of brick-dust and your whiting. Go and sell to the cook-maids; know who has surfeited about town. Bring me no bad news, none of your recoveries again. And you, Mr. Blockhead, I warrant you have not called at Mr. Pestle's, the apothecary: Will that fellow never pay me? I stand bound for all the poison in that starving murderer's shop. He serves me just as Dr. Quibus did, who promised to write a treatise against water-gruel, a damned healthy slop, that has done me more injury than all the faculty. Look you now, you are all upon the sneer; let me have none but downright stupid countenances—— I've a good mind to turn you all off, and take people out of the play-house; but, hang 'em, they are as ignorant of their parts as you are of yours, they never act but when they speak; when the chief indication of the mind is in the gesture, or indeed in case of sorrow in no gesture, except you were to act a widow, or so—— But yours, you dolts, is all in dumb show; dumb show? I mean expressive eloquent show: As who can see such an horrid ugly phiz as that fellow's and not be shocked, offended, and killed of all joy while he beholds it? But we must not loiter—— Ye stupid rogues, whom I have picked out of all the rubbish of mankind, and fed for your eminent worthlessness, attend, and know that I speak you this moment stiff

and immutable to all sense of noise, mirth, or laughter [*Makes mouths at them as they pass by him to bring them to a constant countenance*]. So, they are pretty well—pretty well——

Enter TRUSTY *and* LORD BRUMPTON.

Tru. 'Twas fondness, sir, and tender duty to you, who have been so worthy and so just a master to me, made me stay near you; they left me so, and there I found you wake from your lethargic slumber; on which I will assume an authority to beseech you, sir, to make just use of your revived life, in seeing who are your true friends, and knowing her who has so wrought upon your noble nature as to make it act against itself in disinheriting your brave son.

Ld. B. Sure 'tis impossible she should be such a creature as you tell me—— My mind reflects upon ten thousand endearments that plead unanswerably for her. Her chaste reluctant love, her easy observance of all my wayward humours, to which she would accommodate herself with so much ease, I could scarce observe it was a virtue in her; she hid her very patience.

Tru. It was all art, sir, or indifference to you, for what I say is downright matter of fact.

Ld. B. Why didst thou ever tell me it? or why not in my lifetime, for I must call it so, nor can I date a minute mine, after her being false; all past that moment is death and darkness: Why didst thou not tell me then, I say?

Tru. Because you were too much in love with her to be informed; nor did I ever know a man that touched on conjugal affairs could ever reconcile the jarring humours but in a common hatred of the intermeddler. But on this most extraordinary occasion, which seems pointed out by Heaven itself to disengage you from your cruelty and banishment of an innocent child, I must, I

will conjure you to be concealed, and but contain yourself, in hearing one discourse with that cursed instrument of all her secrets, that Tattleaid, and you'll see what I tell you; you'll call me then your guardian and good genius.

Ld. B. Well, you shall govern me, but would I had died in earnest ere I'd known it; my head swims, as it did when I fell into my fit, at the thoughts of it—— How dizzy a place is this world you live in! All human life's a mere vertigo!

Tru. Ay, ay, my lord, fine reflections—fine reflections, —but that does no business. Thus, sir, we'll stand concealed, and hear, I doubt not, a much sincerer dialogue than usual between vicious persons; for a late accident has given a little jealousy, which makes 'em over-act their love and confidence in each other. [*They retire.*

Enter WIDOW *and* TATTLEAID *meeting, and running to each other.*

Wid. O, Tattleaid! His and our hour is come!

Tat. I always said, by his churchyard cough, you'd bury him, but still you were impatient——

Wid. Nay, thou hast ever been my comfort, my confidant, my friend, and my servant; and now I'll reward thy pains; for though I scorn the whole sex of fellows, I'll give 'em hopes for thy sake; every smile, every frown, every gesture, humour, caprice and whimsey of mine shall be gold to thee, girl; thou shalt feel all the sweet and wealth of being a fine rich widow's woman. Oh! how my head runs my first year out, and jumps to all the joys of widowhood! If thirteen months hence a friend should haul one to a play one has a mind to see, what pleasure 'twill be when my Lady Brumpton's footman's called (who kept a place for that very purpose) to make a sudden insurrection of fine wigs in the pit and side-boxes. Then, with a pretty sorrow in one's face and a willing blush for

being stared at, one ventures to look round and bow to one of one's own quality. Thus [*very directly*] to a smug pretending fellow of no fortune: Thus [*as scarce seeing him*] to one that writes lampoons: Thus [*fearfully*] to one one really loves: Thus [*looking down*] to one's woman-acquaintance; from box to box thus [*with looks differently familiar*]: And when one has done one's part, observe the actors do their's, but with my mind fixed not on those I look at, but those that look at me—— Then the serenades! The lovers!

Tat. O, madam, you make my heart bound within me. I'll warrant you, madam, I'll manage 'em all; and indeed, madam, the men are really very silly creatures, 'tis no such hard matter—— They rulers! They governors! I warrant you indeed!

Wid. Ay, Tattleaid, they imagine themselves mighty things, but government founded on force only is a brutal power. We rule them by their affections, which blinds them into belief that they rule us, or at least are in the government with us—— But in this nation our power is absolute. Thus, thus, we sway—[*playing her fan*]. A fan is both the standard and the flag of England. I laugh to see the men go on our errands; strut in great offices; live in cares, hazards, and scandals; to come home and be fools to us in brags of their dispatches, negotiations, and their wisdom—as my good, dear deceased used to entertain me; which I, to relieve myself from, would lisp some silly request, pat him on the face—— He shakes his head at my pretty folly, calls me simpleton, gives me a jewel, then goes to bed so wise, so satisfied, and so deceived!

Tat. But I protest, madam, I've always wondered how you could accomplish my young lord's being disinherited.

Wid. Why, Tatty, you must know my late lord—how prettily that sounds, my late lord! But I say, my late Lord Frible was generosity—I pressed him there, and

whenever you, by my order, had told him stories to my son-in-law's disadvantage, in his rage and resentment I (whose interest lay otherwise) always fell on my knees to implore his pardon, and with tears, sighs, and importunities for him, prevailed against him; besides this, you know, I had, when I pleased, fits—fits are a mighty help in the government of a good-natured man; but in an ill-natured fellow have a care of 'em—he'll hate you for natural infirmities, will remember your face in its distortion, and not value your return of beauty.

Tat. O rare madam! your ladyship's a great head-piece; but now, dear madam, is the hard task, if I may take the liberty to say it—to enjoy all freedoms, and seem to abstain, to manage the number of pretenders, and keep the disobliged from prating——

Wid. Never fear, Tattleaid; while you have riches, if you affront one to abuse, you can give hopes to another to defend you. These maxims I have been laying up all my husband's life-time, for we must provide against calamities.

Tat. But now, madam, a fine young gentleman with a red coat, that dances——

Wid. You may be sure the happy man (if it be in fate that there is an happy man to make me an unhappy woman) shall not be an old one again. Age and youth married, is the cruelty in Dryden's *Virgil*, where Mezentius ties the dead and living together. I'm sure I was tied to a dead man many a long day before I durst bury him——But the day is now my own. Yet now I think on't, Tattleaid, be sure to keep an obstinate shyness to all our old acquaintance. Let 'em talk of favours if they please; if we grant 'em, still they'll grow tyrants to us; if we discard 'em, the chaste and innocent will not believe we could have confidence to do it, were it so; and the wise, if they believe it, will applaud our prudence.

Tat. Ay, madam — I believe, madam — I speak, madam, but my humble sense — Mr. Cabinet would marry you.

Wid. Marry me ! No, Tattleaid. He that is so mean as to marry a woman after an affair with her, will be so base as to upbraid that very weakness. He that marries his wench will use her like his wench.— Such a pair must sure live in a secret mutual scorn of each other ; and wedlock is hell if at least one side does not love, as it would be Heaven if both did ; and I believe it so much Heaven, as to think it was never enjoyed in this world.

Enter a WOMAN.

Wom. A gentleman to Mrs. Tattleaid——

[*Exit* TATTLEAID.

Wid. Go to him.—Bless me, how careless and open have I been to this subtle creature in the case of Cabinet ; she's certainly in his interests——We people of condition are never guarded enough against those about us. They watch when our minds boil over with joy or grief, to come in upon us. How miserable it is to have one one hates always about one, and when one can't endure one's own reflection upon some actions, who can bear the thoughts of another upon 'em ? But she has me by deep, deep secrets.—The Italians, they say, can readily remove the too much intrusted——Oh ! their pretty scented gloves ! This wench I know has played me false and horned me in my gallants. O Italy, I could resign all my female English liberty to thee, for thy much dearer female pleasure, revenge !

Enter TATTLEAID.

Well, what's the matter, dear Tatty ?

Tat. The matter, madam ? why, madam, Counsellor Puzzle is come to wait on your ladyship about the will,

and the conveyance of the estate. There must, it seems, be no time lost for fear of things. Fie, fie, madam, you a widow these three hours and not looked on a parchment yet——Oh, impious, to neglect the will of the dead!

Wid. As you say, indeed, there is no will of an husband's so willingly obeyed as his last. But I must go in and receive him in my formalities, leaning on a couch, as necessary a posture as his going behind his desk when he speaks to a client——But do you bring him in hither till I am ready. [*Exit.*

Tat. Mr. Counsellor, Mr. Counsellor—— [*Calling.*

Enter PUZZLE *and* CLERK.

Puz. 'Servant, good madam Tattleaid; my ancient friend is gone, but business must be minded——

Tat. I told my lady twice or thrice, as she lies in dumb grief on the couch within, that you were here, but she regarded me not; however, since you say 'tis of such moment, I'll venture to introduce you. Please but to repose here a little while I step in; for methinks I would a little prepare her.

Puz. Alas! alas! Poor lady! [*Exit* TATTLEAID. Damned hypocrites! Well, this noble's death is a little sudden. Therefore, pray, let me recollect. Open the bag, good Tom. Now, Tom, thou art my nephew, my dear sister Kate's only son and my heir, therefore I will conceal from thee on no occasion anything, for I would enter thee into business as soon as possible. Know then, child, that the lord of this house was one of your men of honour and sense who lose the latter in the former, and are apt to take all men to be like themselves. Now this gentleman entirely trusted me, and I made the only use a man of business can of a trust—I cheated him. For I, imperceptibly, before his face, made his whole estate liable to an hundred per annum for myself,

for good services, &c. As for legacies, they are good or not as I please; for, let me tell you, a man must take pen, ink, and paper, sit down by an old fellow, and pretend to take directions; but a true lawyer never makes any man's will but his own; and as the priest of old among us got near the dying man and gave all to the church, so now the lawyer gives all to the law.

Clerk. Ay, sir; but priests then cheated the nation by doing their offices in an unknown language.

Puz. True; but ours is a way much surer, for we cheat in no language at all, but loll in our own coaches, eloquent in gibberish, and learned in juggle——Pull out the parchment; there's the deed, I made it as long as I could. Well, I hope to see the day when the indenture shall be the exact measure of the land that passes by it; for 'tis a discouragement to the gown that every ignorant rogue of an heir should, in a word or two, understand his father's meaning, and hold ten acres of land by half-an-acre of parchment. Nay, I hope to see the time when that there is, indeed, some progress made in, shall be wholly effected, and by the improvement of the noble art of tautology every inn in Holborn an inn of court. Let others think of logic, rhetoric and I know not what impertinence, but mind thou tautology. What's the first excellence in a lawyer? Tautology. What the second? Tautology. What the third? Tautology—as an old pleader said of action. But turn to the deed [*pulls out an immeasurable parchment*], for the will is of no force if I please, for he was not capable of making one after the former—as I managed it; upon which account I now wait upon my lady. By the way, do you know the true meaning of the word, a deed?

Clerk. Ay, sir; a deed is as if a man should say the deed.

Puz. Right. 'Tis emphatically so-called because after it all deeds and actions are of no effect, and you have

nothing to do but hang yourself, the only obliging thing you can then do——But I was telling you the use of tautology. Read toward the middle of that instrument.

Clerk [*reads*]. "I, the said Earl of Brumpton, do give, bestow, grant, and bequeath, over and above the said premises, all the site and capital messuage called by the name of Oatham, and all out-houses, barns, stables, and other edifices and buildings, yards, orchards, gardens, fields, arbours, trees, lands, earths, meadows, greens, pastures, feedings, woods, underwoods, ways, waters, watercourses, fishings, ponds, pools, commons, common of pasture, paths, heath-thickets, profits, commodities and emoluments, with their and every of their appurtenances [PUZZLE *nods and sneers as the synonimous words are repeating, whom* LORD B. *scornfully mimics*] whatsoever, to the said capital messuage and site belonging, or in any wise appertaining, or with the same heretofore used, occupied or enjoyed, accepted, executed, known, or taken as part, parcel, or member of the same; containing in the whole, by estimation, four hundred acres of the large measure, or thereabouts, be the same more or less; all and singular, which the said site, capital messuage, and other the premises, with their and every of their appurtenances are situate, lying, and being——"

Puz. Hold, hold, good Tom; you do come on indeed in business, but don't use your nose enough in reading. [*Reads in a ridiculous law-tone until out of breath.*] Why, you're quite out—You read to be understood. Let me see it.—"I, the said Earl."—Now, again, suppose this were to be in Latin. [*Runs into Latin terminations.*] Making Latin is only making it no English—"*Ego predict—Comes de Brumpton—totas meas barnos—out-housas et stabulas—yardos*"—But there needs no further perusal—I now recollect the whole. My lord, by this instrument, disinherits his son utterly, gives all to my lady, and moreover, grants the wards of two fortune-

wards to her—*id est*, to be sold by her, which is the subject of my business to her ladyship, who, methinks, a little overdoes the affair of grief, in letting me wait thus long on such welcome articles. But here——

Enter TATTLEAID, *wiping her eyes.*

Tat. I have in vain done all I can to make her regard me. Pray, Mr. Puzzle—you're a man of sense—come in yourself, and speak reason, to bring her to some consideration of herself, if possible.

Puz. Tom, I'll come down to the hall to you; dear madam, lead on.

[*Ex.* CLERK *one way*, PUZZLE *and* TATTLEAID *another.* LORD BRUMPTON *and* TRUSTY *advance from their concealment, after a long pause, and staring at each other.*

Ld. B. Trusty, on thy sincerity, on thy fidelity to me, thy friend, thy patron, and thy master, answer me directly to one question: am I really alive? Am I that identical, that numerical, that very same Lord Brumpton, that——

Tru. That very lord—that very Lord Brumpton, the very generous, honest, and good Lord Brumpton, who spent his strong and riper years with honour and reputation; but in his age of decay declined from virtue also. That very Lord Brumpton, who buried a fine lady who brought him a fine son, who is a fine gentleman; but in his age, that very man, unreasonably captivated with youth and beauty, married a very fine young lady, who has dishonoured his bed, disinherited his brave son, and dances o'er his grave.

Ld. B. Oh! that damned tautologist, too—that Puzzle and his irrevocable deed! [*Pausing.*] Well, I know I do not really live, but wander o'er the place where once I had a treasure. I'll haunt her, Trusty, gaze in that false beauteous face, till she trembles—till she looks pale—nay, till she blushes——

Tru. Ay, ay, my lord, you speak a ghost very much; there's flesh and blood in that expression, that false beauteous face!

Ld. B. Then since you see my weakness, be a friend, and arm me with all your care and all your reason——

Tru. If you'll condescend to let me direct you—you shall cut off this rotten limb, your false disloyal wife, and save your noble parts, your son, your family, your honour.

Short is the date in which ill acts prevail,
But honesty's a rock can never fail.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—Lord Hardy's *Lodgings*.

Enter Lord Hardy.

L. H. Now, indeed, I am utterly undone; but to expect an evil softens the weight of it when it happens, and pain no more than pleasure is in reality so great as in expectation. But what will become of me? How shall I keep myself even above worldly want? Shall I live at home a stiff, melancholy, poor man of quality, grow uneasy to my acquaintance as well as myself, by fancying I'm slighted where I am not; with all the thousand particularities which attend those whom low fortune and high spirit make malcontents? No! We've a brave prince on the throne, whose commission I bear, and a glorious war in an honest cause approaching [*clapping his hand on his sword*], in which this shall cut bread for me, and may perhaps equal that estate to which my birth entitled me. But what to do in present pressures—Ha! Trim. [*Calling.*

Enter Trim.

Trim. My lord.

Ld. H. How do the poor rogues that are to recruit my Company?

Trim. Do, sir! They've ate you to your last guinea.

Ld. H. Were you at the agent's?

Trim. Yes.

Ld. H. Well? And how?

Trim. Why, sir, for your arrears, you may have eleven shillings in the pound; but he'll not touch your growing subsistence under three shillings in the pound interest; besides which you must let his clerk, Jonathan Item, swear the peace against you to keep you from duelling—or insure your life, which you may do for eight per cent. On these terms he'll oblige you, which he would not do for anybody else in the regiment; but he has a friendship for you.

Ld. H. Oh, I'm his humble servant; but he must have his own terms. We can't starve, nor must my fellows want. But methinks this is a calm midnight, I've heard no duns to day——

Trim. Duns, my lord? Why now your father's dead, and they can't arrest you. I shall grow a little less upon the smooth with 'em than I have been. Why, friend, says I, how often must I tell you my lord is not stirring: His lordship has not slept well, you must come some other time; your lordship will send for him when you are at leisure to look upon money-affairs; or if they are so saucy, so impertinent as to press to a man of your quality for their own—there are canes, there's Bridewell, there's the stocks for your ordinary tradesmen. But to an haughty, thriving Covent Garden mercer, silk or lace-man, your lordship gives your most humble service to him, hopes his wife's well. You have letters to write, or you'd see him yourself, but you desire he would be with you punctually such a day, that is to say the day after you are gone out of town.

Ld. H. Go, sirrah, you're scurrilous; I won't believe

there are such men of quality. D'ye hear, give my service this afternoon to Mr. Cutpurse, the agent, and tell him I'm obliged to him for his readiness to serve me, for I'm resolved to pay my debts forthwith——

[*A voice without.* I don't know whether he is within or not. Mr. Trim, is my lord within?]

Ld. H. Trim, see who it is. I ain't within, you know. [*Exit* TRIM.

Trim. [*Without.*] Yes, sir, my lord's above; pray walk up——

Ld. H. Who can it be? he owns me, too.

Enter CAMPLEY *and* TRIM.

Dear Tom Campley, this is kind! You are an extraordinary man indeed, who in the sudden accession of a noble fortune can be still yourself, and visit your less happy friends.

Cam. No; you are, my lord, the extraordinary man, who, on the loss of an almost princely fortune, can be master of a temper that makes you the envy, rather than pity, of your more fortunate, not more happy friends.

Ld. H. O, sir, your servant—but let me gaze on thee a little, I han't seen thee since I came home into England—most exactly, negligently, genteelly dressed! I know there's more than ordinary in this [*beating* CAMPLEY'S *breast*]. Come, confess, who shares with me here? I must have her real and poetical name. Come; she's in sonnet, Cynthia; in prose, mistress.

Cam. One you little dream of; though she is in a manner of your placing there.

Ld. H. My placing there?

Cam. Why, my lord, all the fine things you've said to me in the camp of my Lady Sharlot, your father's ward, ran in my head so very much, that I made it my business

to become acquainted in that family, which I did by Mr. Cabinet's means, and am now in love in the same place with your lordship.

Ld. H. How? in love in the same place with me, Mr. Campley?

Cam. Ay, my lord, with t'other sister—with t'other sister.

Ld. H. What a dunce was I, not to know which, without your naming her! Why, thou art the only man breathing fit to deal with her. But my Lady Sharlot, there's a woman—so easily virtuous! So agreeably severe! Her motion so unaffected, yet so composed! Her lips breathe nothing but truth, good sense, and flowing wit.

Cam. Lady Harriot! there's the woman; such life, such spirit, such warmth in her eyes; such a lively commanding air in her glances; so spritely a mien, that carries in it the triumph of conscious beauty; her lips are made of gum and balm. There's something in that dear girl that fires my blood above—above—above——

Ld. H. Above what?

Cam. A grenadier's march.

Ld. H. A soft simile, I must confess! but oh that Sharlot! to recline this aching head, full of care, on that tender, snowy—faithful bosom!

Cam. O that Harriot! to embrace that beauteous[1]——

Ld. H. Ay, Tom; but methinks your head runs too much on the wedding night only, to make your happiness lasting; mine is fixed on the married state. I expect my felicity from Lady Sharlot, in her friendship, her constancy, her piety, her household cares, her

[1] In the first edition this speech reads, "Oh that Harriot! To fold these arms about the waist of that beauteous struggling—and at last yielding fair!" In the *Spectator* (No. 51), Steele condemned the passage as an offence to delicacy and modesty.

maternal tenderness. You think not of any excellence of your mistress that is more than skin-deep——

Cam. When I know her further than skin-deep I'll tell you more of my mind.

Ld. H. O fie, Tom, how can you talk so lightly of a woman you love with honour.—But tell me, I wonder how you make your approaches in besieging such a sort of creature—she that loves addresses, gallantry, fiddles; that reigns and delights in a crowd of admirers. If I know her, she is one of those you may easily have a general acquaintance with, but hard to make particular.

Cam. You understand her very well. You must know I put her out of all her play by carrying it in a humourous manner. I took care in all my actions, before I discovered the lover, that she should in general have a good opinion of me; and have ever since behaved myself with all the good humour and ease I was able; so that she is now extremely at a loss how to throw me from the familiarity of an acquaintance into the distance of a lover; but I laugh her out of it. When she begins to frown and look grave at my mirth, I mimic her till she bursts out a-laughing.

Ld. H. That's ridiculous enough.

Cam. By Cabinet's interest over my Lady Brumpton, with gold and flattery to Mrs. Fardingale, an old maid her ladyship has placed about the young ladies, I have easy access at all times, and am this very day to be admitted by her into their apartment. I have found, you must know, that she is my relation.

Ld. H. Her ladyship has chose an odd companion for young ladies.

Cam. Oh, my lady's a politician. She told Tattleaid one day, that an old maid was the best guard for young ones, for they, like eunuchs in a seraglio, are vigilant out of envy of enjoyments they cannot themselves arrive at. But, as I was saying, I've sent my cousin Fardingale a

song, which she and I are to practise to the spinet. The young ladies will be by; and I am to be left alone with Lady Harriot; then I design to make my grand attack, and to-day win or lose her. I know, sir, this is an opportunity you want. If you'll meet me at Tom's,[1] have a letter ready, I'll myself deliver it to your mistress, conduct you into the house, and tell her you are there—and find means to place you together. You must march under my command to-day, as I have many a one under yours.

Ld. H. But 'faith, Tom, I shall not behave myself with half the resolution you have under mine, for to confess my weakness, though I know she loves me, though I know she is as steadfastly mine as her heart can make her; I know not how, I have so sublime an idea of her high value, and such a melting tenderness dissolves my whole frame when I am near her, that my tongue falters, my nerves shake, and my heart so alternately sinks and rises, that my premeditated resolves vanish into confusion, down-cast eyes, and broken utterance——

Cam. Ha! ha! ha! this in a campaigner too! Why, my lord, that's the condition Harriot would have me in, and then she thinks she could have me; but I, that know her better than she does herself, know she'd insult me, and lead me a two years' dance longer, and perhaps in the end turn me into the herd of the many neglected men of better sense, who have been ridiculous for her sake. But I shall make her no such sacrifice. 'Tis well my Lady Sharlot's a woman of so solid an understanding; I don't know another that would not use you ill for your high value.

Ld. H. But, Tom, I must see your song you've sent your cousin Fardingale, as you call her.

Cam. This is lucky enough [*Aside*]. No; hang it, my

[1] Tom's Coffee House, 17, Great Russell Street, Covent Garden, on the north side, over against Button's. See *Guardian*, No. 71.

lord, a man makes so silly a figure when his verses are reading. Trim—thou hast not left off thy loving and thy rhyming ; Trim's a critic, I remember him a servitor at Oxon [*Gives a paper to* TRIM]. I give myself into his hands, because you shan't see 'em till I'm gone. My lord, your servant, you shan't stir.

Ld. H. Nor you neither then. [*Struggling.*]

Cam. You will be obeyed.

[*Exeunt.* LORD HARDY *waits on him down.*

Trim. What's in this song? Ha! don't my eyes deceive me—a bill of three hundred pounds——

"MR. CASH,

"Pray pay to Mr. William Trim, or bearer, the sum of three hundred pounds, and place it to the account of,

"Sir,

"Your humble servant,

"THOMAS CAMPLEY."

[*Pulling off his hat and bowing.*] Your very humble servant, good Mr. Campley. Ay, this is poetry—this is a song indeed! Faith, I'll set it, and sing it myself. Pray pay to Mr. William Trim—so far in recitativo—three hundred [*singing ridiculously*]—hun—dred—hundred—hundred thrice repeated, because 'tis three hundred pounds — I love repetitions in music, when there's a good reason for it,—po—unds after the Italian manner. If they'd bring me such sensible words as these, I'd outstrip all your composers for the music prize. This was honestly done of Mr. Campley, though I have carried him many a purse from my master when he was ensign to our Company in Flanders——

Enter LORD HARDY.

My lord, I am your lordship's humble servant.

Ld. H. Sir, your humble servant. But pray, my good

familiar friend, how come you to be so very much my humble servant all of a sudden?

Trim. I beg pardon, dear sir, my lord, I am not your humble servant.

Ld. H. No!

Trim. Yes, my lord, I am, but not as you mean; but I am—I am, my lord—in short, I'm overjoyed.

Ld. H. Overjoyed! thou'rt distracted, what ails the fellow? Where's Campley's song?

Trim. Oh! my lord, one would not think 'twas in him. Mr. Campley's really a very great poet; as for the song, 'tis only as they all end in rhyme: Ow—woe—isses—kisses—boy—joy. But, my lord, the other in long heroic blank verse.

[*Reading it with a great tone.*

Pray pay to Mr. William Trim, or order, the sum of—How sweetly it runs! Pactolian guineas chink every line.

Ld. H. How very handsomely this was done in Campley! I wondered, indeed, he was so willing to show his verses. In how careless a manner that fellow does the greatest actions!

Trim. My lord, pray my lord, shan't I go immediately to Cutpurse's?

Ld. H. No, sirrah, now we have no occasion for it.

Trim. No, my lord, only to stare him full in the face after I have received this money, not say a word, but keep my hat on, and walk out. Or perhaps not hear, if any I meet with speak to me, but grow stiff, deaf, and shortsighted to all my old acquaintance, like a sudden rich man as I am. Or, perhaps, my lord, desire Cutpurse's clerk to let me leave fifty pounds at their house, payable to Mr. William Trim, or order, till I come that way, or, a month or two hence, may have occasion for it: I don't know what bills may be drawn upon me. Then when the clerk begins to stare at me, till he pulls the

great goose-quill from behind his ear [*Pulls a handfull of farthings out*] I fall a-reckoning the pieces as I do these farthings.

Ld. H. Well, sirrah, you may have your humour, but be sure you take four score pounds, and pay my debts immediately. If you meet any officer you ever see me in company with, that looks grave at Cutpurse's house, tell him I'd speak with him: We must help our friends. But learn moderation, you rogue, in your good fortune; be at home all the evening after, while I wait at Tom's to meet Campley, in order to see Lady Sharlot.

My good or ill in her alone is found,
And in that thought all other cares are drowned.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—LORD BRUMPTON'S *House.*

Enter SABLE, LORD BRUMPTON *and* TRUSTY.

Sab. Why, my lord, you can't in conscience put me off so. I must do according to my orders, cut you up, and embalm you, except you'll come down a little deeper than you talk of; you don't consider the charges I have been at already.

Ld. B. Charges! for what?

Sab. First, twenty guineas to my lady's woman for notice of your death (a fee I've, before now, known the widow herself go halves in), but no matter for that. In the next place, ten pounds for watching you all your long fit of sickness last winter.

Ld. B. Watching me? Why I had none but my own servants by turns.

Sab. I mean attending to give notice of your death. I had all your long fit of sickness last winter, at half-a-crown a day, a fellow waiting at your gate to bring me intelligence, but you unfortunately recovered, and I lost my obliging pains for your service.

Ld. B. Ha! ha! ha! Sable, thou art a very impudent fellow; half-a-crown a day to attend my decease, and dost thou reckon it to me?

Sab. Look you, gentlemen, don't stand staring at me. I have a book at home which I call my Doomsday book, where I have every man of quality's age and distemper in town, and know when you should drop. Nay, my lord, if you had reflected upon your mortality half so much as poor I have for you, you would not desire to return to life thus; in short, I cannot keep this a secret, under the whole money I am to have for burying you.

Ld. B. Trusty, if you think it safe in you to obey my orders after the deed Puzzle told his clerk of, pay it to him.

Tru. I should be glad to give it out of my own pocket, rather than be without the satisfaction of seeing you witness to it.

Ld. B. I heartily believe thee, dear Trusty.

Sab. Then, my lord, the secret of your being alive, is now safe with me.

Tru. I'll warrant I'll be revenged of this unconscionable dog [*Aside*]—My lord, you must to your closet, I fear somebody's coming.

[*Exeunt* SABLE *one way*, LD. B. *and* TRUSTY *another.*]

SCENE III.—LORD BRUMPTON'S *House.*

LADY SHARLOT *discovered reading at a table;* LADY HARRIOT *playing at a glass to and fro, and viewing herself.*

L. Ha. Nay, good sage sister, you may as well talk to me [*Looking at herself as she speaks*], as sit staring at a book, which I know you can't attend. Good Dr. Lucas[1] may have writ there what he pleases, but there's no putting Francis Lord Hardy, now Earl of Brumpton, out of your head, or making him absent from your eyes; do but look at me now, and deny it if you can.

L. Sh. You are the maddest girl—— [*Smiling.*

L. Ha. Look ye, I knew you could not say it and forbear laughing [*Looking over* SHARLOT]. Oh, I see his name as plain as you do—F—r—a—n Fran, c—i—s cis, Francis, 'tis in every line of the book.

L. Sh. [*Rising*] 'Tis in vain, I see, to mind anything in such impertinent company, but granting 'twere as you say as to my Lord Hardy, 'tis more excusable to admire another than one's self.

L. Ha. No, I think not; yes, I grant you than really to be vain at one's person, but I don't admire myself. Pish! I don't believe my eyes have that softness [*Looking in the glass*], they ain't so piercing. No, 'tis only stuff the men will be talking. Some people are such admirers of teeth. Lord, what signifies teeth? [*Showing her teeth.*] A very black-a-moor has as white teeth as I. No, sister, I don't admire myself, but I've a spirit of contradiction in me; I don't know I'm in love myself, only to rival the men.

[1] Richard Lucas, D.D. (1648—1715), wrote, among other things, *The Enquiry after Happiness*, and *Practical Christianity*. The latter, published in 1700, was afterwards referred to in the *Guardian*, No. 63, and there are quotations from both works in Steele's *Ladies' Library*, 1714.

L. Sh. Ay, but Mr. Campley will gain ground even of that rival of his, your dear self.

L. Ha. Oh! what have I done to you, that you should name that insolent intruder, a confident opinionative fop. No indeed, if I am, as a poetical lover of mine sighed and sung of both sexes—

The public envy, and the public care,

I shan't be so easily catched—I thank him—I want but to be sure I should heartily torment him, by banishing him, and then consider whether he should depart this life, or not.

L. Sh. Indeed, sister, to be serious with you, this vanity in your humour does not at all become you!

La. H. Vanity! All the matter is we gay people are more sincere than you wise folks: All your life's an art. Speak your soul—look you there—[*Hailing her to the glass*] are not you struck with a secret pleasure, when you view that bloom in your looks, that harmony in your shape, that promptitude of your mien?

L. Sh. Well, simpleton, if I am at first so silly, as to be a little taken with myself, I know it a fault, and take pains to correct it.

L. Ha. Pshaw! pshaw! talk this musty tale to old Mrs. Fardingale, 'tis too soon for me to think at that rate.

L. Sh. They that think it too soon to understand themselves, will very soon find it too late. But tell me honestly, don't you like Campley?

L. Ha. The fellow is not to be abhorred, if the forward thing did not think of getting me so easily. Oh! I hate a heart I can't break when I please. What makes the value of dear china, but that 'tis so brittle? Were it not for that, you might as well have stone mugs in your closet.

L. Sh. Hist, hist, here's Fardingale.

Enter FARDINGALE.

Far. Lady Harriot, Lady Sharlot! I'll entertain you now, I've a new song just come hot out of the poet's brain. Lady Sharlot, my cousin Campley writ it, and 'tis set to a pretty air, I warrant you.

L. Ha. 'Tis like to be pretty indeed, of his writing.

[*Flings away.*

Far. Come, come, this is not one of your tringham trangham witty things, that your poor poets write; no, 'tis well known my cousin Campley has two thousand pounds a year. But this is all dissimulation in you.

L. Sh. 'Tis so, indeed, for your cousin's song is very pretty, Mrs. Fardingale.

[*Reads.*]

Let not love on me bestow
Soft distress and tender woe;
I know none but substantial blisses,
Eager glances, solid kisses;
I know not what the lovers feign,
Of finer pleasure mixed with pain
Then prithee give me, gentle boy,
None of thy grief, but all thy joy.[1]

But Harriot thinks that a little unreasonable, to expect one without enduring t'other.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. There's your cousin Campley to wait on you without.

Far. Let him come in, we shall have the song now.

Enter CAMPLEY.

Cam. Ladies, your most obedient servant; your servant, Lady Sharlot—servant Lady Harriot—[HARRIOT

[1] Daniel Purcell composed music for these verses.

looks grave upon him] What's the matter, dear Lady Harriot, not well? I protest to you I'm mightily concerned [*Pulls out a bottle*]. This is a most excellent spirit, snuff it up, madam.

L. Ha. Pish—the familiar coxcomb frets me heartily.

Cam. 'Twill over, I hope, immediately.

L. Sh. Your cousin Fardingdale has shown us some of your poetry; there's the spinet, Mr. Campley, I know you're musical.

Cam. She should not have called it my poetry.

Far. No—who waits there—pray bring my lute out of the next room.

Enter SERVANT *with a Lute.*

You must know I conned this song before I came in, and find it will go to an excellent air of old Mr. Lawes's, who was my mother's intimate acquaintance; my mother's, what do I talk of? I mean my grandmother's. Oh, here's the lute; cousin Campley, hold the song upon your hat. —[*Aside to him*] 'Tis a pretty gallantry to a relation.

[*Sings and Squalls.*]

Let not love, &c.

Oh! I have left off these things many a day.

Cam. No; I profess, madam, you do it admirably, but are not assured enough. Take it higher [*in her own squall*]. Thus—I know your voice will bear it.

L. Ha. O hideous! O the gross flatterer—I shall burst. Mrs. Fardingale, pray go on, the music fits the words most aptly. Take it higher, as your cousin advises.

Far. Oh! dear madam, do you really like it? I do it purely to please you, for I can't sing, alas!

L. Sh. We know it, good madam, we know it. But pray——

[1] Henry Lawes, the friend of Milton, and his associate in the production of *Comus*, died in 1662.

Far. "Let not love," and "substantial blisses," is lively enough, and ran accordingly in the tune. [*Curtsies to the company.*] Now I took it higher.

L. Ha. Incomparably done! Nothing can equal it, except your cousin sang his own poetry.

Cam. Madam, from my Lord Hardy. [*Delivers a letter to* LADY SHARLOT.]—How do you say, my Lady Harriot, except I sing it myself? Then I assure you I will——

L. Sh. I han't patience. I must go read my letter. [*Exit.*

Cam. [*Sings*] Let not love, &c.

Far. Bless me, what's become of Lady Sharlot? [*Exit.*

L. Ha. Mrs. Fardingale, Mrs. Fardingale, what, must we lose you? [*Going after her.*

CAMPLEY *runs to the door, takes the key out, and locks her in.*

What means this insolence? a plot upon me—Do you know who I am?

Cam. Yes, madam, you're my Lady Sharlot Lovely, with ten thousand pounds in your pocket; and I am Mr. Campley, with two thousand a year, of quality enough to pretend to you. And I do design, before I leave this room, to hear you talk like a reasonable woman, as nature has made you. Nay, 'tis in vain to flounce, and discompose yourself and your dress.

L. Ha. If there are swords, if they are men of honour, and not all dastards, cowards that pretend to this injured person—— [*Running round the room.*

Cam. Ay, ay, madam, let 'em come. That's putting me in my way, fighting's my trade; but you've used all mankind too ill to expect so much service. In short, madam, were you a fool I should not desire to expostulate with you. [*Seizing her hand.*] But——

L. Ha. Unhand me, ravisher. [*Pulls her hand from him, chases round the room,* CAMPLEY *after her.*

Cam. But madam, madam, madam, why madam!

Prithee Cynthia look behind you, [*Sings.*
Age and wrinkles will o'ertake you.

L. Ha. Age, wrinkles, small-pox, nay, anything that's most abhorrent to youth and bloom, were welcome in the place of so detested a creature.

Cam. No such matter, Lady Harriot. I would not be a vain coxcomb, but I know I am not detestable, nay, know where you've said as much before you understood me for your servant. Was I immediately transformed because I became your lover?

L. Ha. My lover, sir! did I ever give you reason to think I admitted you as such?

Cam. Yes, you did in your using me ill; for if you did not assume upon the score of my pretending to you, how do you answer to yourself some parts of your behaviour to me as a gentleman? 'Tis trivial, all this, in you, and derogates from the good sense I know you mistress of. Do but consider, madam, I have long loved you, bore with your fantastic humour through all its mazes. Nay, do not frown, for 'tis no better. I say I have bore with this humour, but would you have me with an unmanly servitude feed it? No, I love you with too sincere, too honest a devotion, and would have your mind as faultless as your person, which 'twould be, if you'd lay aside this vanity of being pursued with sighs, with flatteries, with nonsense [*She walks about less violently, but more confused.*]—Oh! my heart aches at the disturbance which I give her, but she must not see it. [*Aside.*]—Had I not better tell you of it now, than when your are in my power? I should be then too generous to thwart your inclination.

L. Ha. That is indeed very handsomely said. Why should I not obey reason as soon as I see it? [*Aside.*]—

Since so, Mr. Campley, I can as ingenuously as I should then, acknowledge that I have been in an error.

[*Looking down on her fan.*

Cam. Nay, that's too great a condescension. Oh! excellence! I repent! I see 'twas but justice in you to demand my knees [*kneeling*], my sighs, my constant, tenderest regard and service. And you shall have 'em, since you are above 'em.

L. Ha. Nay, Mr. Campley, you won't recall me to a fault you have so lately shown me. I will not suffer this—no more ecstasies! But pray, sir, what was't you did to get my sister out of the room?

Cam. You may know it, and I must desire you to assist my Lord Hardy there, who writ to her by me; for he is no ravisher, as you called me just now. He is now in the house, and I would fain gain an interview.

L. Ha. That they may have, but they'll make little use of it; for the tongue is the instrument of speech to us of a lower form: They are of that high order of lovers, who know none but eloquent silence, and can utter themselves only by a gesture that speaks their passion inexpressible, and what not fine things.

Cam. But pray let's go into your sister's closet while they are together.

L. Ha. I swear I don't know how to see my sister—she'll laugh me to death to see me out of my pantofles,[1] and you and I thus familiar. However, I know she'll approve it.

Cam. You may boast yourself an heroine to her, and the first woman that was ever vanquished by hearing truth, and had sincerity enough to receive so rough an obligation as being made acquainted with her faults. Come, madam, stand your ground bravely, we'll march in to her thus. [*She leaning on* CAMPLEY.

L. Ha. Who'll believe a woman's anger more? I've betrayed the whole sex to you, Mr. Campley. [*Exeunt.*

[1] Slippers.

Re-enter LORD HARDY *and* CAMPLEY.

Cam. My lord, her sister, who now is mine, will immediately send her hither. But be yourself: Charge her bravely. I wish she were a cannon, an eighteen-pounder, for your sake. Then I know, were there occasion, you'd be in the mouth of her.

Ld. H. I long, yet fear to see her. I know I am unable to utter myself.

Cam. Come, retire here till she appears.

[*They go back to the door.*

Enter LADY SHARLOT.

L. Sh. Now is the tender moment now approaching. [*Aside.*] There he is. [*They approach and salute each other trembling.*] Your lordship will please to sit. [*After a very long pause, stolen glances, and irresolute gesture.*] Your lordship, I think, has travelled those parts of Italy where the armies are.

Ld. H. Yes, madam.

L. Sh. I think I have letters from you, dated Mantua.

Ld. H. I hope you have, madam, and that their purpose——

L. Sh. My lord? [*Looking serious and confused.*

Ld. H. Was not your ladyship going to say something?

L. Sh. I only attended to what your lordship was going to say—That is, my lord—But you were, I believe, going to say something of that garden of the world, Italy. I am very sorry your misfortunes in England are such as make you justly regret your leaving that place.

Ld. H. There is a person in England may make those losses insensible to me.

L. Sh. Indeed, my lord, there have so very few of quality attended his Majesty in the war, that your birth and merit may well hope for his favour.

Ld. H. I have, indeed, all the zeal in the world for his Majesty's service, and most grateful affection for his person, but did not then mean him.

L. Sh. But can you indeed impartially say that our island is really preferable to the rest of the world, or is it an arrogance only in us to think so?

Ld. H. I profess, madam, that little I have seen has but more endeared England to me; for that medley of humours which perhaps distracts our public affairs, does, methinks, improve our private lives, and makes conversation more various, and consequently more pleasing. Everywhere else both men and things have the same countenance. In France you meet much civility and little friendship; in Holland, deep attention, but little reflection; in Italy, all pleasure, but no mirth. But here with us, where you have everywhere pretenders or masters in everything, you can't fall into company wherein you shall not be instructed or diverted.

L. Sh. I never had an account of anything from you, my lord, but I mourned the loss of my brother; you would have been so happy a companion for him, with that right sense of yours. My lord, you need not bow so obsequiously, for I do you but justice. But you sent me word of your seeing a lady in Italy very like me. Did you visit her often?

Ld. H. Once or twice, but I observed her so loose a creature, that I could have killed her for having your person.

L. Sh. I thank you, sir; but Heaven that preserves me unlike her, will, I hope, make her more like me. But your fellow traveller — his relations themselves know not a just account of him.

Ld. H. The original cause of his fever was a violent passion for a fine young woman he had not power to speak to, but I told her his regard for her as passionately as possible.

L. Sh. You were to him what Mr. Campley has been to you—Whither am I running?—Poor, your friend—poor gentleman——

Ld. H. I hope then as Campley's eloquence is greater, so has been his success.

L. Sh. My lord?

Ld. H. Your ladyship's——

Enter LADY HARRIOT.

L. Ha. Undone! Undone! Tattleaid has found, by some means or other, that Campley brought my Lord Hardy hither; we are utterly ruined, my lady's coming.

Ld. H. I'll stay and confront her.

L. Sh. It must not be; we are too much in her power.

Enter CAMPLEY.

Cam. Come, come, my lord, we're routed horse and foot. Down the back stairs, and so out.

Ladies. Ay, ay. [*Exeunt.*

L. Ha. I tremble every joint of me.

L. Sh. I'm at a stand a little, but rage will recover me; she's coming in.

Enter WIDOW.

Wid. Ladies, your servant. I fear I interrupt you; have you company? Lady Harriot, your servant; Lady Sharlot, your servant. What, not a word? Oh, I beg your ladyship's pardon. Lady Sharlot, did I say? My young Lady Brumpton, I wish you joy.

L. Sh. Oh, your servant, Lady Dowager Brumpton. That's an appellation of much more joy to you.

Wid. So smart, madam! but you should, methinks, have made one acquainted—Yet, madam, your conduct is seen through.

L. Sh. My conduct, Lady Brumpton!

Wid. Your conduct, Lady Sharlot!

[*Coming up to each other.*

L. Sh. Madam, 'tis you are seen through all your thin disguises.

Wid. I seen? By whom?

L. Sh. By an all-piercing eye, nay, by what you much more fear, the eye of the world. The world sees you, or shall see you. It shall know your secret intemperance, your public fasting—Loose poems in your closet, an homily on your toilet—Your easy, skilful, practised hypocrisy, by which you wrought upon your husband, basely to transfer the trust and ward of us, two helpless virgins, into the hands and care of—I cannot name it. You're a wicked woman.

L. Ha. [*Aside.*] O rare sister! 'Tis a fine thing to keep one's anger in stock by one. We that are angry and pleased every half-hour have nothing at all of all this high-flown fury! Why, she rages like a princess in a tragedy! Blessings on her tongue.

Wid. Is this the effect of your morning lectures, your self-examination, all this fury?

L. Sh. Yes it is, madam; if I take pains to govern my passions, it shall not give licence to others to govern them for me.

Wid. Well, Lady Sharlot, however you ill deserve it of me, I shall take care, while there are locks and bars, to keep you from Lord Hardy—from being a leager lady, from carrying a knapsack.

L. Sh. Knapsack! Do you upbraid the poverty your own wicked arts have brought him to? Knapsack! O grant me patience! Can I hear this of the man I love? Knapsack! I have not words.

[*Stamps about the room.*

Wid. I leave you to cool upon it; love and anger are very warm passions. [*Exit.*

L. Ha. She has locked us in.

L. Sh. Knapsack? Well, I will break walls to go to him. I could sit down and cry my eyes out! Dear sister, what a rage have I been in? Knapsack! I'll give vent to my just resentment. Oh, how shall I avoid this base woman; how meet that excellent man! What an helpless condition are you and I in now! If we run into the world, that youth and innocence which should demand assistance does but attract invaders. Will Providence guard us? How do I see that our sex is naturally indigent of protection! I hope 'tis in fate to crown our loves; for 'tis only in the protection of men of honour that we are naturally truly safe—

> And woman's happiness, for all her scorn,
> Is only by that side whence she was born.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—Lord Hardy's *Lodgings*.

Enter Lord Hardy, Campley, *and* Trim.

L. H. That jade Tattleaid saw me upon the stairs, for I had not patience to keep my concealment, but must peep out to see what was become of you.

Cam. But we have advice, however, it seems, from the garrison already—this mistress of Trim's is a mighty lucky accident.

Trim. Ay, gentlemen, she has free egress and regress, and you know the French are the best-bred people in the world—she'll be assistant. But, 'faith, I have one scruple that hangs about me; and that is, look you, my lord, we servants have no masters in their absence. In a word, when I am with mademoiselle I talk of your lordship as only a particular acquaintance; that I do business indeed for you sometimes. I must needs say, cries I, that indeed my Lord Hardy is really a person I have a great honour for.

Ld. H. Pish! is that all? I understand you; your mistress does not know that you do me the honour to clean my shoes or so, upon occasion. Pr'ythee, Will, make yourself as considerable as you please.

Trim. Well, then, your lesson is this. She, out of respect to me, and understanding Mr. Campley was an intimate of my friend, my Lord Hardy, and condescending (though she is of a great house in France) to make manteaus for the improvement of the English—which gives her easy admittance—she, I say, moved by these promises,[1] has vouchsafed to bring a letter from my Lady Harriot to Mr. Campley, and came to me to bring her to him. You are to understand also that she is dressed in the latest French cut; her dress is the model of their habit, and herself of their manners. For she is—but you shall see her. [*Exit.*

Ld. H. This gives me some life! Cheer up, Tom—but behold the solemnity. Do you see Trim's gallantry? I shall laugh out.

Enter TRIM *leading in* MADEMOISELLE.

Trim. My dear Lord Hardy, this is Mademoiselle d'Epingle, whose name you've often heard me sigh. [LORD HARDY *salutes her.*] Mr. Campley—Mademoiselle d'Epingle. [CAMPLEY *salutes her.*]

Mad. Votre servante, gentlemen, votre servante.

Cam. I protest to you I never saw anything so becoming as your dress. Shall I beg the favour you'd condescend to let Mr. Trim lead you once round the room, that I may admire the elegance of your habit?

[TRIM *leads her round.*

Ld. H. How could you ask such a thing?

Cam. Pshaw, my lord, you are a bashful English fellow. You see she is not surprised at it, but thinks me gallant in desiring it. Oh, madam! your air! the negligence, the disengagement of your manner! Oh how delicate is your noble nation! I swear there's none but

[1] Gildon suggests that this should be "premises"; but the word was not altered in later editions of the play.

the clumsy Dutch and English would oppose such polite conquerors. When shall you see an Englishwoman so dressed?

Mad. De Englise! poor barbarians; poor savages; dey know no more of de dress but to cover dere nakedness [*Glides along the room*]. Dey be cloded, but no dressed — But, Monsieur Terim, which Monsieur Campley?

Trim. That's honest Tom Campley.

Cam. At your service, mademoiselle.

Mad. I fear I incur de censure [*Pulling out the letter, and recollecting as loth to deliver it*], but Mr. Terim being your intimate friend, and I designing to honour him in de way of an husband—so—so—how do I run away in discourse—I never make promise to Mr. Terim before, and now to do it par accident——

Cam. Dear Will Trim is extremely obliging in having prevailed upon you to do a thing that the severity of your virtue, and the greatness of your quality (though a stranger in the country you now honour by your dwelling in it) would not let you otherwise condescend to——

Mad. Oh, monsieur! oh, monsieur! you speak my very thoughts. Oh! I don't know how, pardon me, to give a billet—it so look! O fie! I can no stay after it. *Drops it, runs affectedly to the other end of the room, then quite out; re-enters.*] I beg ten tousand pardons for go away to mal-propos. [*Curtsies as going.*

Ld. H. Your servant, good madam. Mr. Trim, you know you command here. Pray, if Madam d'Epingle will honour our cottage with longer stay, wait on her in and entertain her. Pray, sir, be free.

Trim. My lord, you know your power over me; I'm all complaisance. [*Leads her out.*

Cam. Now to my dear epistle—

"SIR,

"There is one thing which you were too generous to touch upon in our last conversation. We have reason to fear the Widow's practices in relation to our fortunes, if you are not too quick for her. I ask Lady Sharlot whether this is not her sense to Lord Hardy. She says nothing, but lets me write on. These people always have, and will have, admittance everywhere, therefore we may hear from you.

"I am, sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"HARRIOT LOVELY."

My obedient servant! Thy obedience shall ever be as voluntary as now—ten thousand thousand kisses on thee, thou dear paper. Look you, my lord, what a pretty hand it is?

Ld. H. Why, Tom, thou dost not give me leave to see it. You snatch it to your mouth so, you'll stifle the poor lady.

Cam. Look you, my lord, all along the lines here went the pen; and through them white intervals her snowy fingers. Do you see, this is her name?

Ld. H. Nay, there's Lady Sharlot's name, too, in the midst of the letter. Why, you'll not be so unconscionable; you're so greedy, you'll give me one kiss sure?

Cam. Well, you shall; but you're so eager. Don't bite me, for you shan't have it in your own hands. There, there, there: Let go my hand.

Ld. H. What an exquisite pleasure there is in this foolery—but what shall we do?

Cam. I have a thought; pry'thee, my lord, call Trim.

Ld. H. Ha, Trim——

Cam. Hold, Mr. Trim. You forget his mistress is there.

Ld. H. Cra'mercy! Dear Will Trim, step in hither.

Cam. Ay, that's something——

Enter TRIM.

Trim, have not I seen a young woman sometimes carry Madam d'Epingle's trinkets for her, coming from my Lady Brumpton's?

Trim. Yes, you might have seen such a one; she waits for her now.

Cam. Do you think you could not prevail for me to be dressed in that wench's clothes, and attend your mistress in her stead thither? They'll not dream we should so soon attempt again——

Trim. Yes, I'll engage it.

Cam. Then we'll trust the rest to our good genius. I'll about it instantly—Harriot Lovely——

[*Exit, kissing the letter.*

SCENE II.—LADY BRUMPTON'S *Room.*

Enter WIDOW *and* TATTLEAID.

Wid. This was well done of you; be sure you take care of their young ladyships; you shall, I promise you, have a snip in the sale of 'em.

Tat. I thank your good ladyship.

Wid. Is that the porter's paper of how d'ye's?

Tat. Yes, madam, he just sent it up. His general answer is, that you're as well as can be expected in your condition, but that you see nobody.

Wid. That's right. [*Reading names.*] Lady Riggle,

Lady Formal—Oh! that Riggle, a pert ogler, an indiscreet silly thing, who is really known by no man, yet for her carriage, justly thought common to all; and as Formal has only the appearance of virtue, so she has only the appearance of vice. What chance, I wonder, put these contradictions to each other into the same coach, as you say they called? Mrs. Frances and Mrs. Winifred Glebe—who are they?

Tat. They are the country great fortunes have been out of town this whole year; they are those whom your ladyship said upon being very well born took upon 'em to be very ill bred.

Wid. Did I say so? really I think 'twas apt enough, now I remember 'em. Lady Wrinkle—oh, that smug old woman! There's no enduring her affectation of youth, but I plague her; I always ask whether her daughter in Wiltshire has a grandchild yet or not. Lady Worthy—I can't bear her company, she has so much of that virtue in her heart which I have in my mouth only. [*Aside.*] Mrs. After-Day—oh that's she that was the great beauty, the mighty toast about town—that's just come out of the small-pox; she's horribly pitted they say; I long to see her and plague her with my condolence. 'Tis a pure ill-natured satisfaction to see one that was a beauty unfortunately move with the same languor and softness of behaviour that once was charming in her—to see, I say, her mortify that used to kill—ha! ha! ha! The rest are a catalogue of mere names or titles they were born to, an insipid crowd of neither good nor bad; but you are sure these other ladies suspect not in the least that I know of their coming?

Tat. No, dear madam, they are to ask for me.

Wid. I hear a coach. [*Exit* TAT.] I've now an exquisite pleasure in the thought of surpassing my Lady Sly, who pretends to have out-grieved the whole town for her husband. They are certainly coming.—Oh no! here,

let me—thus let me sit and think. [WIDOW *on her couch; while she is raving as to herself,* TATTLEAID *softly brings in the ladies.*] Wretched, disconsolate as I am! Oh welcome, welcome, dear killing anguish! Oh, that I could lie down and die in my present heaviness—but what—how? Nay, my dear, dear lord, why do you look so pale, so ghastly at me? Wottoo, wottoo, fright thy own trembling, shivering wife——

Tat. Nay, good madam, be comforted.

Wid. Thou shalt not have me. [*Pushes* TAT.

Tat. Nay, good madam, 'tis I, 'tis I, your ladyship's own woman—'tis I, madam, that dress you, and talk to you, and tell you all that's done in the house every day; 'tis I——

Wid. Is it, then, possible? Is it, then, possible that I am left? Speak to me not—hold me not. I'll break the listening walls with my complaints. [*Looks surprised at seeing company, then severely at* TATTLEAID.] Ah! Tattleaid——

1*st La.* Nay, madam, be not angry at her, we would come in in spite of her. We are your friends and are as concerned as you——

Wid. Ah! madam, madam, madam, madam, I am an undone woman. Oh me! Alas! Alas! Oh! Oh! [*All join in her notes.*] I swoon—I expire. [*Faints.*

2*nd La.* Pray, Mrs. Tattleaid, bring something that is cordial to her. [*Exit* TATTLEAID.

3*rd La.* Indeed, madam, you should have patience. His lordship was old. To die is but going before in a journey we must all take.

Enter TATTLEAID *loaded with bottles. 3rd Lady takes a bottle from her and drinks.*

4*th La.* Lord, how my Lady Fleer drinks: I've heard, indeed, but never could believe it of her. [*Drinks also.*

1st La. But, madam,[1] don't you hear what the town says of the jilt Flirt the men liked so much in the Park? Hark ye—was seen with him in an Hackney-coach—and silk stockings—key-hole—his wig—on the chair——

[*Whispers by interruptions.*

2nd La. Impudent Flirt, to be found out!

3rd La. But I speak it only to you——

4th La. Nor I but to one more——

[*Whispers next woman.*

5th La. I can't believe it; nay, I always thought it, madam—— [*Whispers the* WIDOW.

Wid. Sure, 'tis impossible! the demure, prim thing! Sure all the world's hypocrisy. Well, I thank my stars, whatsoever sufferings I have, I've none in reputation. I wonder at the men; I could never think her handsome. She has really a good shape and complexion, but no mien; and no woman has the use of her beauty without mien! Her charms are dumb, they want utterance. But whither does distraction lead me—to talk of charms?

1st La. Charms? A chit's, a girl's charms. Come, let us widows be true to ourselves, keep our countenances and our characters, and a fig for the maids—I mean for the unmarried.

2nd La. Ay, since they will set up for our knowledge, why should not we for their ignorance?

3rd La. But, madam, on Sunday morning at church I curtsied to you, and looked at a great fuss in a glaring light dress next pew. That strong masculine thing is a knight's wife, pretends to all the tenderness in the world, and would fain put the unwieldy upon us for the soft, the languid! She has of a sudden left her dairy, and sets up for a fine town-lady, calls her maid Sisly her woman, speaks to her by her surname, Mrs. Cherryfist, and her

[1] It is interesting to compare the ensuing dialogue with similar scenes in Sheridan's *School for Scandal.*

great foot-boy of nineteen, big enough for a trooper, is striped into a lace coat, now Mr. Page forsooth.

4th La. Oh! I have seen her. Well, I heartily pity some people for their wealth, they might have been unknown else! You'd die, madam, to see her and her equipage. I thought the honest fat tits, her horses, were ashamed of their finery; they dragged on as if they were still at the plough, and a great bashful-looked booby behind grasped the coach as if he held one.

5th La. Alas! some people think there's nothing but being fine to be genteel; but the high prance of the horses, and the brisk insolence of the servants in an equipage of quality, are inimitable, but to our own beasts and servants.

1st La. Now you talk of equipage, I envy this lady the beauty she'll appear in in a mourning coach, 'twill so become her complexion; I confess I myself mourned two years for no other reason. Take up that hood there; Oh! that fair face with a veil. [*They take up her hoods.*

Wid. Fie, fie, ladies. But I've been told, indeed, black does become—

2nd La. Well, I'll take the liberty to speak it, there's young Nutbrain has long had (I'll be sworn) a passion for this lady; but I'll tell you one thing I fear she'll dislike, that is, he's younger than she is.

3rd La. No, that's no exception; but I'll tell you one, he's younger than his brother.

Wid. Ladies, talk not of such affairs. Who could love such an unhappy relict as I am? But, dear madam, what grounds have you for that idle story?

4th La. Why he toasts you, and trembles when you're spoke of; it must be a match.

Wid. Nay, nay; you rally, you rally; but I know you mean it kindly.

1st La. I swear we do.

[TATTLEAID *whispers the* WIDOW.

Wid. But I must beseech you, ladies, since you have been so compassionate as to visit and accompany my sorrow, to give me the only comfort I can now know, to see my friends cheerful, and to honour an entertainment Tattleaid has prepared within for you. If I can find strength enough I'll attend you; but I wish you'd excuse me, for I've no relish of food or joy, but will try to get a bit down in my own chamber.

All. No, no, you must go with us.

1st La. There's no pleasure without you.

Wid. But, madam, I must beg of your ladyship not to be so importune to my fresh calamity, as to mention Nutbrain any more; I'm sure there's nothing in it. In love with me, quoth a'. [*Is helped off. Exeunt.*

Enter MADEMOISELLE, *and* CAMPLEY *in womens' clothes carrying her things.*

Mad. I very glad us be in de ladies' antichamber; I was shamed of you. You, you, such an impudent look; besides, me wonder you were not seized by the constable, when you pushed de man into de kennel.

Cam. Why, should I have let him kissed me?

Mad. No; but if you had hit him wit fan, and say, why sure saucy-box, it been enough; beside, what you hitted de gentleman for offer kiss me?

Cam. I beg pardon, I did not know you were pleased with it.

Mad. Please, no, but me rader be kiss den you, Mr. Terim's friend, be found out. Could not you say when he kiss me, sure saucy-box dat's meat for your master? Besides, you take such strides when you walk—walk—O fie; dese littil pette tiny bits a woman steps.

[*Showing her step.*

Cam. But prithee, mademoiselle, why have you lost your English tongue all of a sudden? Methought when the fellow called us French whores, as we came along,

and said we came to starve their own people, you gave him pretty plain English; he was a dog, a rascal, you'd send him to the stocks.

Mad. Ha! ha! ha! I was in a passion and betrayed myself, but you're my lover's friend, and a man of honour, therefore know you'll do nothing to injure us. Why, Mr. Campley, you must know I can speak as good English as you, but I don't for fear of losing my customers. The English will never give a price for anything they understand. Nay, I've known some of your fools pretend to buy with good breeding, and give any rate rather than not be thought to have French enough to know what they were doing; strange and far-fetched things they only like. Don't you see how they swallow gallons of the juice of tea, while their own dock-leaves are trod under foot? But mum; my Lady Harriot.

Enter LADY HARRIOT.

Madam, votre servante, servante——

L. Ha. Well, mademoiselle, did you deliver my letter?

Mad. Oui.

L. Ha. Well, and how—is that it in your hand?

Mad. Oui.

L. Ha. Well then, why don't you give it me?

Mad. O fie! lady, dat be so right Englise, de Englise mind only de words of de lovers, but de words of de lovers are often lie, but de action no lie.

L. Ha. What does the thing mean? Give me my letter.

Mad. Me did not deliver your letter.

L. Ha. No?

Mad. No, me tell you, me did drop it, to see Mr. Campley how cavalier to take it up. As dese me drop it so monsieur run take it up.

[*They both run to take it up,* MAD. *takes it.*

L. Ha. Will you give me my letter or not?

Mad. Oui. But dus he do. Dere de letter—very well, very well. O l'amour! You act de manner Mr. Campley—take it up better den I, do' you no see it.

[*They both run,* HARRIOT *gets it.*

L. Ha. [*Reads.*]

"MADAM,

"I am glad you mentioned what indeed I did not at that time think of, nor if I had, should I have known how to have spoken of. But bless me more than fortune can, by turning those fair eyes upon, madam,

"Your most faithful,

"Most obedient humble servant,

"THO. CAMPLEY."

What does he mean? "But bless me more—by turning"—Oh, 'tis he himself [*Looking about observes* CAM. *smile*]. Oh, the hoyden, the romp, I did not think anything could add to your native confidence, but you look so very bold in that dress, and your arms will fall off, and your petticoats how they hang!

Cam. Mademoiselle, voulez vous de Salville l'eau d'Hongrie, chez Monsieur Marchand de Montpelier—Dis for your teet [*Showing his trinkets*], de essence, a little book French for teach de elder broders make compliments. Will you, I say, have anything that I have, will you have all I have, madam?

L. Ha. Yes, and for humour's sake, will never part with this box, while I live, ha! ha! ha!

Cam. But, Lady Harriot, we must not stand laughing; as you observe in your letter, delays are dangerous in this wicked woman's custody of you; therefore I must, madam, beseech you, and pray stay not on niceties, but be advised.

L. Ha. Mr. Campley, I have no will but yours.

Cam. Thou dear creature, but [*Kisses her hand*] harkee

then, you must change dresses with mademoiselle, and go with me instantly.

L. Ha. What you please.

Cam. Madam d'Epingle, I must desire you to comply with a humour of gallantry of ours—you may be sure I'll have an eye over the treatment you have upon my account—only to change habits with Lady Harriot, and let her go while you stay.

Mad. Wit all my heart.[1] [*Offers to undress herself.*

L. Ha. What, before Mr. Campley?

Mad. Oh, oh—very Anglaise! dat is so Englise, all women of quality in France are dress and undress by a valet de chambre; de man chamber-maid help complexion better den de woman. [*Apart to* L. HARRIOT.

L. Ha. Nay, that's a secret in dress, mademoiselle, I never knew before, and am so unpolished an English woman as to resolve never to learn even to dress before my husband. Oh! Indecency! Mr. Campley, do you hear what mademoiselle says?

Mad. Oh! Hist—bagatelle.

L. Ha. Well, we'll run in and be ready in an instant.

[*Exeunt* L. HARRIOT *and* MADEMOISELLE.

Cam. Well, I like her every minute better and better. What a delicate chastity she has! There's something so gross in the carriage of some wives (though they're honest too) that they lose their husbands' hearts for faults which, if they had either good nature or good breeding, they know not how to tell 'em of. But how happy am I in such a friend as Hardy, such a mistress as Harriot!

Continue Heaven, a grateful heart to bless
With faith in friendship, and in love success.

[1] Budgell refers to this scene in a paper in the *Spectator* (No. 506), on happiness in the married state.

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—Lord Brumpton's *House.*

Enter Widow *and* Trusty.

WID. Mr. Trusty, you have, I do assure you, the same place and power in the management of my Lord Brumpton's estate, as in his life-time. (I am reduced to a necessity of trusting him) [*aside.*] However Tattleaid dissembles the matter, she must be privy to Lady Harriot's escape, and Fardingale's as deep with 'em both, and I fear will be their ruin, which 'tis my care and duty to prevent. Be vigilant, and you shall be rewarded. I shall employ you wholly in Lady Sharlot's affairs, she is able to pay services done for her. You've sense, and understand me. [*Exit* Widow.

Tru. Yes, I do indeed understand you, and could wish another could with as much detestation as I do, but my poor old lord is so strangely, so bewitchedly enamoured of her, that even after this discovery of her wickedness, I see he could be reconciled to her, and though he is ashamed to confess to me, I know he longs to speak with her. If I tell Lord Hardy all to make his fortune, he

would not let his father be dishonoured by a public way of separation. If things are acted privately, I know she'll throw us all; there's no middle-way, I must expose her to make a reunion impracticable. Alas, how is honest truth banished the world, when we must watch the seasons and soft avenues to men's hearts, to gain it entrance even for their own good and interest! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—LORD HARDY'S *Lodgings.*

Enter LORD HARDY, CAMPLEY, *and* TRIM.

Ld. H. I forget my own misfortunes, dear Campley, when I reflect on your success.

Cam. I assure you, it moderates the swell of joy that I am in, to think of your difficulties. I hope my felicity is previous to yours; my Lady Harriot gives her service to you, and we both think it but decent to suspend our marriage 'till your and Lady Sharlot's affairs are in the same posture.

Ld. H. Where is my lady?

Cam. She's at my aunt's, my lord. But, my lord, if you don't interpose, I don't know how I shall adjust matters with Mr. Trim for leaving his mistress behind me: I fear he'll demand satisfaction of me.

Trim. No, sir, alas, I can know no satisfaction while she is in jeopardy. Therefore would rather be put in a way to recover her by storming the castle, or other feat of arms, like a true enamoured swain as I am.

Cam. Since we are all three then expecting lovers, my lord, prithee let's have that song of yours which suits our common purpose.

Ld. H. Call in the boy.

BOY *sings.*[1]

I.

Ye minutes bring the happy hour,
And Chloe blushing to the bower;
Then shall all idle flames be o'er,
Nor eyes or heart e'er wander more;
Both, Chloe, fixed for e'er on thee,
For thou art all thy sex to me.

II.

A guilty is a false embrace,
Corinna's love's a fairy-chace;
Begone, thou meteor, fleeting fire,
And all that can't survive desire.
Chloe my reason moves and awe,
And Cupid shot me when he saw.

Trim. Look you, gentlemen, since as you are pleased to say we're all lovers, and consequently poets, pray do me the honour to hear a little air of mine. You must know then, I once had the misfortune to fall in love below myself, but things went hard with us at that time, so that my passion, or as I may poetically speak, my fire was in the kitchen; 'twas towards a cook-maid, but before I ever saw Mrs. Deborah.

Ld. H. Come on then, Trim, let's have it.

Trim. I must run into next room for a lute. [*Exit.*

Cam. This must be diverting! can the rogue play?

Re-enter TRIM, *with a pair of Tongs.*

Trim. Dear Cynderaxa herself very well understood this instrument, I therefore always sung this song to it, as thus—

I.

Cynderaxa kind and good,
Has all my heart and stomach too;

[1] Daniel Purcell composed music for this song.

She makes me love, not hate, my food,
As other peevish wenches do.

II.

When Venus leaves her Vulcan's cell,
Which all but I a coal-hole call;
Fly, fly, ye that above stairs dwell,
Her face is washed, ye vanish all.

III.

And as she's fair, she can impart
That beauty, to make all things fine;
Brightens the floor with wondrous art,
And at her touch the dishes shine.

Ld. H. I protest, Will, thou art a poet indeed. "And at her touch the dishes shine"—and you touch your lute as finely.

Enter BOY.

Boy. There's one Mr. Trusty below would speak with my lord.

Ld. H. Mr. Trusty? My father's steward? What can he have to say to me?

Cam. He's very honest, to my knowledge.

Ld. H. I remember, indeed, when I was turned out of the house he followed me to the gate and wept over me, for which I've heard he'd like to have lost his place. But, however, I must advise with you a little about my behaviour to him; let's in. Boy, bring him up hither, tell him I'll wait on him presently. [*Exit* BOY.

I shall want you, I believe, here, Trim. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter BOY *and* TRUSTY.

Boy. My lord will wait on you here immediately.

[*Exit* BOY.

Tru. 'Tis very well, these lodgings are but homely for the Earl of Brumpton. Oh, that damned strumpet—that

I should ever know my master's wife for such!—How many thousand things does my head run back to? After my poor father's death the good lord took me, because he was a captain in his regiment, and gave me education. I was, I think, three-and-twenty when this young lord within was christened; what a do there was about calling him Francis! [*Wipes his eyes.*] These are but poor lodgings for him. I cannot bear the joy, to think that I shall save the family from which I've had my bread.

Enter TRIM.

Trim. Sir, my lord will wait you immediately.

Tru. Sir, 'tis my duty to wait him—[*As* TRIM *is going*] but, sir, are not you the young man that attended him at Christchurch, in Oxford, and have followed him ever since?

Trim. Yes, sir, I am.

Tru. Nay, sir, no harm, but you'll thrive the better for it.

Trim. I like this old fellow; I smell more money. [*Aside. Exit.*

Tru. I think 'tis now eight years since I saw him—he was not then nineteen—when I followed him to the gate, and gave him fifty guineas, which I pretended his father sent after him.

Enter LORD HARDY.

Ld. H. Mr. Trusty, I'm very glad to see you look very hale and jolly; you wear well. I'm glad to see it—but your commands to me, Mr. Trusty.

Tru. Why, my lord, I presume to wait on your lordship. My lord, you're strangely grown; you're your father's very picture, you're he, my lord; you are the very man that looked so pleased to see me look so fine in my laced livery, to go to Court. I was his page when he was just such another as you. He kissed me afore a great many lords, and said I was a brave man's son, that taught

him to exercise his arms. I remember he carried me to the great window, and bid me be sure to keep in your mother's sight in all my finery. She was the finest young creature; the maids of honour hated to see her at Court. My lord then courted my good lady. She was as kind to me on her death-bed; she said to me, Mr. Trusty, take care of my lord's second marriage for that child's sake. She pointed as well as she could to you. You fell a-crying, and said she should not die; but she did, my lord. She left the world, and no one like her in't. Forgive me, my honoured master. [*Weeps, runs to my lord, and hugs him.*] I've often carried you in these arms that grasp you; they were stronger then, but if I die to-morrow, you're worth five thousand pounds by my gift—'tis what I've got in the family, and I return it to you with thanks. But alas! do I live to see you want it?[1]

Ld. H. You confound me with all this tenderness and generosity.

Tru. I'll trouble you no longer, my lord, but——

Ld. H. Call it not a trouble, for——

Tru. My good lord, I will not, I say, indulge myself in talking fond tales that melt me, and interrupt my story. My business to your lordship, in one word, is this: I am in good confidence at present with my lady dowager, and I know she has some fears upon her, which depend upon the nature of the settlement to your disfavour, and under the rose—be yourself—I fear your father has not had fair play for his life—be composed, my lord. What is to be done is this: we'll not apply to public justice in this case, 'till we see farther; 'twill make it noisy, which

[1] In the *Lay Monastery*, No. 9 (December 4th, 1713), Blackmore dwelt on the fine touches of humanity in the part of Trusty in this play. He said this passage was too well known on the stage to need transcribing: "This is not only nature, but nature of the most beautiful kind; or, to borrow Plautus's own remark, by the representation of such plays even *good men may be made better*."

we must not do, if I might advise. You shall, with a detachment of your Company, seize the corpse as it goes out of the house this evening to be interred in the country; 'twill only look like taking the administration upon yourself, and commencing a suit for the estate. She has put off the lying in state, and Lady Harriot's escape with Mr. Campley makes her fear he will prove a powerful friend, both to the young ladies and your lordship. She cannot, with decency, be so busy, as when the corpse is out of the house, therefore hastens it. I know your whole affair; leave the care of Lady Sharlot to me. I'll pre-acquaint her, that she mayn't be frightened, and dispose of her safely, to observe the issue.

Ld. H. I wholly understand you; it shall be done.

Tru. I'm sure I am wanted this moment for your interest at home. This ring shall be the passport of intelligence for whom you send to assault us, and the remittance of it sealed with this, shall be authentic from within the house.

Ld. H. 'Tis very well.

Tru. Hope all you can wish, my lord, from a certain secret relating to the estate, which I'll acquaint you with next time I see you. [*Exit.*

Ld. H. Your servant—— This fellow's strangely honest—— Ha! Will.

Enter CAMPLEY *and* TRIM.

Will! don't the recruits wait for me to see 'em at their parade before this house?

Trim. Yes; and have waited these three hours.

Ld. H. Go to 'em; I'll be there myself immediately. We must attack with 'em, if the rogues are sturdy, this very evening.

Trim. I guess where—— I'm overjoyed at it. I'll warrant you they do it, if I command in chief.

Ld. H. I design you shall. [TRIM *runs out jumping.*

Cam. You seem, my lord, to be in deep meditation.

Ld. H. I am so, but not on anything that you may not be acquainted with. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Covent Garden.*

Enter TRIM, *with a company of ragged fellows, with a cane.*

1*st Sol.* Why then, I find, Mr. Trim, we shall come to blows before we see the French.

Trim. Harkee, friend, 'tis not your affair to guess or enquire what you're going to do; 'tis only for us commanders.

2*nd Sol.* The French? Pox! they are but a Company of scratching civet cats. They fight!

Trim. Harkee, don't bluster. Were not you a little mistaken in your facings at Steinkirk?

2*nd Sol.* I grant it; you know I have an antipathy to the French—I hate to see the dogs. Look you here, gentlemen, I was shot quite through the body, look you.

Trim. Prithee, look where it entered at your back.

2*nd Sol.* Look you, Mr. Trim, you will have your joke, we know you are a wit—but what's that to a fighting man?

Enter KATE.

Kate. Mr. Trim! Mr. Trim!——

Trim. Things are not as they have been, Mrs. Kate. I now pay the Company, and we that pay money expect a little more ceremony.

Kate. Will your honour please to taste some right French brandy?

Trim. Art thou sure, good woman, 'tis right? [*Drinks.* How—French—pray—nay, if I find you deceive me, who pay the men—— [*Drinks.*

Kate. Pray, good master, have you spoken to my lord about me?

Trim. I have, but you shall speak to him yourself. Thou hast been a true campaigner, Kate, and we must not neglect thee. Do you sell grey pease yet of an evening, Mrs. Matchlock? [*Drinks again.*

Kate. Anything to turn the penny, but I got more by crying pamphlets this year, than by anything I have done a great while. Now I am married into the Company again, I design to cross the seas next year. But, master, my husband, a Temple porter, and a Parliament man's footman, last night by their talk made me think there was danger of a peace; why, they said, all the prime people were against a war.

Trim. No, no, Kate, never fear; you know I keep great company. All men are for a war, but some would have it abroad, and some would have it at home in their own country.

Kate. Ay, say you so? Drink about, gentlemen, not a farthing to pay; a war is a war, be it where it will. But pray, Mr. Trim, speak to my lord, that when these gentlemen have shirts I may wash for 'em.

Trim. I tell you, if you behave well to-night, you shall have a fortnight's pay each man as a reward; but there's none of you industrious. There's a thousand things you might do to help out about this town, as to cry, puff, puff pies—have you any knives or scissors to grind? or, late in an evening, whip from Grub Street, strange and bloody news from Flanders—votes from the House of Commons—buns, rare buns—old silver lace, cloaks, suits, or coats—old shoes, boots, or hats—But here, here, here's my lord a-coming; here's the captain. Fall back into the rank there; move up in the centre.

Enter LORD HARDY *and* CAMPLEY.

Ld. H. Let me see whether my ragged friends are ready and about me.

Kate. Ensign Campley, Ensign Campley, I am overjoyed to see your honour; ha! the world's surely altered, ha!

Cam. 'Tis so, faith! Kate, why thou art true to the cause, with the Company still, honest amazon.

Kate. Dear soul, not a bit of pride in him; but won't your honour help in my business with my lord? Speak for me, noble ensign, do.

Cam. Speak to him yourself; I'll second you.

Kate. Noble captain, my lord! I suppose Mr. Trim has told your honour about my petition. I have been a great sufferer in the service. 'Tis hard for a poor woman to lose nine husbands in a war, and no notice taken; nay, three of 'em, alas, in the same campaign. Here the woman stands that says it. I never stripped a man 'till I first tried if he could stand on his legs, and, if not, I think 'twas fair plunder, except our adjutant, and he was a puppy, that made my eighth husband run the gauntlet for not turning his toes out.

Ld. H. Well, we'll consider thee, Kate, but fall back into the rear. A roll of what? Gentlemen soldiers?

Trim [*To* PUMKIN]. Do you hear that? My lord himself can't deny but we are all gentlemen, as much as his honour.

Ld. H. [*Reading*]. Gentlemen soldiers quartered in and about Guy Court in Vinegar Yard, in Russel Court in Drury Lane, belonging to the honourable Captain Hardy's Company of Foot—So, answer to your names, and march off from the left. John Horseem, corporal, march easy, that I may view you as you pass by me. Drums Simon Ruffle, Darby Tattoo—there's a shilling for you

—Tattoo be always so tight; how does he keep himself so clean?

Trim. Sir, he is a tragedy drum to one of the play-houses.

Ld. H. Private gentlemen: Alexander Cowitch, Humphrey Mundungus, William Faggot, Nicholas Scab, Timothy Megrim, Philip Scratch, Nehemiah Dust, Humphrey Garbage, Nathaniel Matchlock.

Cam. What! Is Matchlock come back to the Company? That's the fellow that brought me off at Steinkirk.

Ld. H. No, sir, 'tis I am obliged to him for that. [*Offering to give him money.*] There, friend, you shall want for nothing; I'll give thee a halbert too.

Kate. O brave me! Shall I be a sergeant's lady? I' faith, I'll make the drums, and the corporal's wives, and Company-keepers know their distance.

Cam. How far out of the country did you come to list? Don't you come from Cornwall? How did you bear your charges?

Match. I was whipped from constable to constable——

Trim. Ay, my lord, that's due by the courtesy of England to all that want in red coats; besides, there's an Act that makes us free of all corporations, and that's the ceremony of it.

Cam. But what pretence had they for using you so ill? You did not pilfer?

Match. I was found guilty of being poor.

Cam. Poor devil!

Ld. H. Timothy Ragg! O Ragg! I thought when I gave you your discharge, just afore the peace, we should never have had you again. How came you to list now?

Ragg. To pull down the French king.

Ld. H. Bravely resolved! But pull your shirt into your breeches in the mean time. Jeoffrey Tatter—

What's become of the skirts and buttons of your coat?

Tatter. In our last clothing in the regiment I served in afore, the colonel had one skirt before, the agent one behind, and every captain of the regiment a button.

Ld. H. Hush, you rogue, you talk mutiny. [*Smiling.*

Trim. Ay, sirrah, what have you to do with more knowledge than that of your right hand from your left?

[*Hits him a blow on the head.*

Ld. H. Hugh Clump—Clump, thou growest a little too heavy for marching.

Trim. Ay, my lord, but if we don't allow him the pay he'll starve, for he's too lame to get into the hospital.

Ld. H. Richard Bumpkin! Ha! A perfect country hick. How came you, friend, to be a soldier?

Bump. An't please your honour, I have been crossed in love, and am willing to seek my fortune.

Ld. H. Well, I've seen enough of 'em. If you mind your affair, and act like a wise general, these fellows may do—come, take your orders. [TRIM *puts his hat on his stick, while my lord is giving him the ring, and whispers orders.*] Well, gentlemen, do your business manfully, and nothing shall be too good for you.

All. Bless your honour. [*Exeunt* HARDY *and* CAMPLEY.

Trim. Now, my brave friends and fellow-soldiers—[*Aside.*] I must fellow-soldier 'em just afore a battle, like a [illegible] though I cane 'em all the year round beside [illegible] *about.*] Major-General Trim; no, pox, Trim sounds so very short and priggish—that my name should be a monosyllable! But the foreign news will write me, I suppose, Monsieur or Chevalier Trimont. Seigneur Trimoni, or Count Trimuntz, in the German Army, I shall perhaps be called; ay, that's all the plague and comfort of us great men, they do so toss our names about. But, gentlemen, you are now under my command—huzza!

thrice—faith, this is very pleasing, this grandeur! Why, after all, 'tis upon the neck of such scoundrels as these gentlemen that we great captains build our renown. A million or two of these fellows make an Alexander, and as that my predecessor said in the tragedy of him on the very same occasion, going to storm for his Statira, so do I for my dear seamstress, Madam d'Epingle—

> When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay;
> 'Tis beauty calls, and glory leads the way.[1]

[1] These lines are in the spirit of, but are not a quotation from Lee's *Rival Queens, or the Death af Alexander the Great.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—Lord Brumpton's *House*.

Enter Trusty *and* Lord Brumpton.

TRU. She knows no moderation in her good fortune; she has, out of impatience to see herself in her weeds, ordered her mantua woman to stitch up anything immediately. You may hear her and Tattleaid laugh aloud—she is so wantonly merry.

Ld. B. But this of Lady Sharlot is the very utmost of all ill. Pray read—but I must sit; my late fit of the gout makes me act with pain and constraint. Let me see——

Tru. She writ it by the page, who brought it me, as I had wheedled him to do all their passages.

Ld. B. [*Reads.*]

"You must watch the occasion of the servants being gone out of the house with the corpse; Tattleaid shall conduct you to my Lady Sharlot's apartment—away with her—and be sure you bed her——

"Your affectionate Sister,

"Mary Brumpton.'

Brumpton? The creature! She called as Frank's mother was? Brumpton! The succuba! What a devil incarnate have I had in my bosom? Why, the common abandoned town women would scruple such an action as

this. Though they have lost all regard to their own chastity, they would be tender of another's. Why, sure she had no infancy. She never had virginity, to have no compassion through memory of her own former innocence. This is to forget her very humanity—her very sex. Where is my poor boy? Where's Frank? Does not he want? How has he lived all this time? Not a servant, I warrant, to attend him—what company can he keep? What can he say of his father?

Tru. Though you made him not your heir, he is still your son, and has all the duty and tenderness in the world for your memory.

Ld. B. It is impossible, Trusty; it is impossible. I will not rack myself with the thought, that one I have injured can be so very good—keep me in countenance—tell me he hates my very name, would not assume my title because it descends from me. What's his company?

Tru. Young Tom Campley; they are never asunder.

Ld. B. I am glad he has my pretty tattler—the cheerful innocent Harriot. I hope he'll be good to her; he's good-natured and well-bred.

Tru. But, my lord, she was very punctual in ordering the funeral. She bid Sable be sure to lay you deep enough, she had heard such stories of the wicked sextons taking up people; but I wish, my lord, you would please to hear her and Tattleaid once more——

Ld. B. I know to what thy zeal tends; but I tell you, since you cannot be convinced but that I have still a softness for her—I say though I had so, it should never make me transgress that scrupulous honour that becomes a peer of England. If I could forget injuries done myself thus gross, I never will those done my friends. You knew Sharlot's worthy father—No, there's no need of my seeing more of this woman. I behold her now with the same eyes that you do; there's a meanness in all she says or does; she has a great wit but a little

mind—something ever wanting to make her appear my Lady Brumpton. She has nothing natively great. You see I love her not; I talk with judgment of her.

Tru. I see it, my good lord, with joy I see it, nor care how few things I see more in this world. My satisfaction is complete. Welcome old age; welcome decay; 'tis not decay, but growth to a latter being.

[*Exit, leading* LORD BRUMPTON.

Re-enter TRUSTY, *meeting* CABINET.

Tru. I have your letter, Mr. Cabinet.

Cab. I hope, sir, you'll believe it was not in my nature to be guilty of so much baseness; but being born a gentleman, and bred out of all roads of industry in that idle manner too many are, I soon spent a small patrimony; and being debauched by luxury, I fell into the narrow mind to dread no infamy like poverty, which made me guilty, as that paper tells you; and had I not writ to you, I am sure I never could have told you of it.

Tru. It is an ingenious, pious penitence in you; my Lord Hardy (to whom this secret is inestimable) is a noble-natured man, and you shall find him such, I give you my word.

Cab. I know, sir, your integrity.

Tru. But pray be there; all that you have to do is to ask for the gentlewoman at the house at my Lord Hardy's; she'll take care of you. And pray have patience, where she places you, till you see me. [*Exit* CAB.] My Lord Hardy's being a house where they receive lodgers, has allowed me convenience to place everybody I think necessary to be by at her discovery. This prodigious welcome secret! I see, however impracticable honest actions may appear, we may go on with just hope—

All that is ours is to be justly bent,
And Heaven in its own cause will bless the event.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Covent Garden.*

Enter TRIM *and his party.*

Trim. March up, march up. Now we are near the citadel, and halt only to give the necessary orders for the engagement. Ha! Clump, Clump! When we come to Lord Brumpton's door, and you see us conveniently disposed about the house, you are to wait till you see a corpse brought out of the house; then to go up to him you observe the director, and ask importunately for an alms to a poor soldier, for which you may be sure you shall have a good blow or two; but if you have not, be saucy till you have. Then when you see a file of men got between the house and the body—a file of men, Bumpkin, is six men—I say, when you see the file in such a posture, that half the file may face to the house, half to the body, you are to fall down, crying murder, that the half file faced to the body may throw it and themselves over you. I then march to your rescue. Then, Swagger, you and your party fall in to secure my rear, while I march off with the body. These are the orders; and this, with a little improvement of my own, is the same disposition Villeroy and Catinat made at Chiari. [*Marches off with his party.*

SCENE III.—LORD BRUMPTON'S *House.*

Enter Widow, *in deep mourning, with a dead squirrel on her arm, and* TATTLEAID.

Wid. It must be so; it must be your carelessness. What had the page to do in my bedchamber?

Tat. Indeed, madam, I can't tell. But I came in and catched him wringing round his neck——

Wid. Tell the rascal from me he shall romp with the

footmen no more. No; I'll send the rogue in a frock to learn Latin among the dirty boys that come to good, I will. But 'tis ever so among these creatures that live on one's superfluous affections; a lady's woman, page, and squirrel are always rivals.

Poor harmless animal—pretty e'en in death:
Death might have overlooked thy little life—
How could'st thou, Robin, leave thy nuts and me?
How was't importunate, dearest, thou should'st die?
Thou never did'st invade thy neighbour's soils;
Never mad'st war with specious shows of peace;
Thou never hast depopulated regions,
But cheerfully did'st bear thy little chain,
Content—so I but fed thee with this hand.

Tat. Alas, alas! we are all mortal. Consider, madam, my lord's dead too. [*Weeps.*

Wid. Ay, but our animal friends do wholly die; an husband or relation, after death, is rewarded or tormented; that's some consolation—I know her tears are false, for she hated Robin always; but she's a well-bred, dishonest servant, that never speaks a painful truth [*Aside.*]—But I'll resolve to conquer my affliction—never speak more of Robin—hide him there. But to my dress: How soberly magnificent is black—and the train—I wonder how widows came to wear such long tails?

Tat. Why, madam, the stateliest of all creatures has the longest tail; the peacock, nay, 't has of all creatures the finest mien too—except your ladyship, who are a Phœnix——

Wid. Ho! brave Tattleaid! But did not you observe what a whining my Lady Sly made when she had drank a little? Did you believe her? Do you think there are really people sorry for their husbands?

Tat. Really, madam, some men do leave their fortunes in such distraction that I believe it may be——

[*Speaks with pins in her mouth.*

Wid. But I swear I wonder how it came up to dress us thus. I protest, when all my equipage is ready, and I move in full pageantry, I shall fancy myself an embassadress from the Commonwealth of Women, the distressed State of Amazonia—to treat for men. But I protest I wonder how two of us thus clad can meet with a grave face! Methinks they should laugh out like two fortune-tellers, or two opponent lawyers that know each other for cheats——

Tat. Ha! ha! ha! I swear to you, madam, your ladyship's wit will choke me one time or other. I had like to have swallowed all the pins in my mouth——

Wid. But, Tatty, to keep house six weeks, that's another barbarous custom; but the reason of it, I suppose, was that the base people should not see people of quality may be as afflicted as themselves.

Tat. No, 'tis because they should not see 'em as merry as themselves.

Wid. Ha! ha! ha! Hussy, you never said that you spoke last. Why, 'tis just—'tis satire—I'm sure you saw it in my face, that I was going to say it: 'Twas too good for you. Come, lay down that sentence and the pincushion, and pin up my shoulder. Harkee, hussy, if you should, as I hope you won't, outlive me, take care I ain't buried in flannel; 'twould never become me, I'm sure.[1] That they can be as merry: Well, I'll tell my

[1] The object of the Act of 1678 (30 Charles II. c. 3), which obliged the dead to be buried in woollen, was to protect homespun goods against foreign linen.

> " 'Odious! in woollen! 'twould a saint provoke,'
> Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke;
> 'No, let a charming chintz and Brussels lace
> Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face;
> One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead—
> And—Betty—give this cheek a little red.' "
>
> (POPE, *Moral Essays*, i. 246—251.)

Pope here alludes, says Carruthers, to Mrs. Oldfield, who acted Narcissa in Cibber's *Love's Last Shift*. She was buried in Westminster Abbey, the corpse being decorated with "a Brussels lace

new acquaintance—what's her name?—she that reads so much, and writes verses. Her husband was deaf the first quarter of a year; I forget her name. That expression she'll like. Well, that woman does divert me strangely; I'll be very great with her. She talked very learnedly of the ridicule till she was ridiculous; then she spoke of the decent, of the agreeable, of the insensible. She designs to print the discourse; but of all things, I like her notion of the insensible.

Tat. Pray, madam, how was that?

Wid. A most useful discourse to be inculcated in our teens. The purpose of it is to disguise our apprehension in this ill-bred generation of men, who speak before women what they ought not to hear. As now, suppose you were a spark in my company, and you spoke some double entendre, I look thus! But be a fellow, and you shall see how I'll use you. The insensible is useful upon any occasion where we seemingly neglect and secretly approve, which is our ordinary common case. Now, suppose a coxcomb, dancing, prating, and playing his tricks before me to move me, without pleasure or distaste in my countenance, I look at him, just thus; but—— Ha! ha! ha! I have found out a supplement to this notion of the insenible, for my own use, which is infallible,

head-dress, a Holland shift, with tucker and double ruffles of the same lace, and a pair of new kid gloves." — See, too, *Tatler*, No. 118.

It is evident that by making a certain payment persons of position could evade the Act; in the Overseers' Rate Books for the Parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, one or two persons in the year are often mentioned as being buried in linen: Thus in the volume for 1702 (p. 147) I found—

"Received for persons buried in linen, contrary to Act of Parliament:

For ——————— £2 5 0
For the Earl of Macclesfield £2 10 0."

Mr. Austin Dobson has pointed out that if Anne Oldfield really gave the orders alleged by Pope she was only elaborating the words of Steele's widow, which she must have often heard on the stage, as she acted the part of Lady Sharlot in this play.

and that is to have always in my head all that they can say or do to me. So never be surprised with laughter, the occasion of which is always sudden.

Tat. Oh! my Lady Brumpton [TATTLEAID *bows and cringes*], my lady, your most obedient servant.

Wid. Look you, wench, you see by the art of insensibility I put you out of countenance, though you were prepared for an ill-reception.

Tat. Oh! madam, how justly are you formed for what is now fallen to you—the empire of mankind.

Wid. Oh! sir, that puts me out of all my insensibility at once; that was so gallant—Ha! what noise is that; that noise of fighting? Run, I say. Whither are you going? What, are you mad? Will you leave me alone? Can't you stir? What, you can't take your message with you? Whatever 'tis, I suppose you are not in the plot; not you—Nor that now they're breaking open my house for Sharlot—Not you—Go, see what's the matter, I say, I have nobody I can trust. [*Exit* TATTLEAID] One minute I think this wench honest, and the next false. Whither shall I turn me?

Tat. Madam, madam. [*Re-entering.*

Wid. Madam, madam, will you swallow me gaping?

Tat. Pray, good my lady, be not so out of humour; but there is a company of rogues have set upon our servants and the burial man's, while others ran away with the corpse.

Wid. How, what can this mean? What can they do with it?—Well, 'twill save the charge of interment.—But to what end?

Enter TRUSTY *and a* SERVANT, *bloody and dirty, haling in* CLUMP *and* BUMPKIN.

Ser. I'll teach you better manners; I'll poor soldier you, you dog you, I will. Madam, here are two of the

rascals that were in the gang of rogues that carried away the corpse.

Wid. We'll examine 'em apart. Well, sirrah, what are you? Whence came you? What's your name, sirrah?

[CLUMP *makes signs as a dumb man.*

Ser. Oh, you dog, you could speak loud enough just now, sirrah, when your brother rogues mauled Mr. Sable. We'll make you speak, sirrah.

Wid. Bring the other fellow hither. I suppose you will own you knew that man before you saw him at my door?

Clump. I think I have seen the gentleman's face.

[*Bowing to* BUMPKIN.

Wid. The gentleman's! The villain mocks me. But friend, you look like an honest man—what are you? Whence came you? What are you, friend?

Bump. I'se at present but a private gentleman, but I was lifted to be a sergeant in my Lord Hardy's Company. I'se not ashamed of my name nor of my koptin.

Wid. Leave the room all. [*Exeunt all but* TRUSTY *and* TATTLEAID.] Mr. Trusty—Lord Hardy! O, that impious young man, thus, with the sacrilegious hands of ruffians to divert his father's ashes from their urn and rest—I suspect this fellow [*Aside.*]—Mr. Trusty, I must desire you to be still near me. I'll know the bottom of this; and to Lord Hardy's lodgings as I am, instantly. 'Tis but the back side of this street, I think. Let a coach be called.—Tattleaid, as soon as I am gone, conduct my brother and his friends to Lady Sharlot. Away with her. Bring mademoiselle away to me, that she may not be a witness.—Come, good Mr. Trusty.

SCENE IV.—LORD HARDY'S *Lodgings.*

Enter LORD HARDY, *leading* HARRIOT; CAMPLEY, *and* TRIM.

L. Ha. Why, then I find this Mr. Trim is a perfect general; but I assure you, sir, I'll never allow you an hero, who could leave your mistress behind you. You should have broke the house down, but you should have mademoiselle with you.

Trim. No, really, madam, I have seen such strange fears come into the men's heads, and such strange resolutions into the women's upon the occasion of ladies following a camp, that I thought it more discreet to leave her behind me. My success will naturally touch her as much as if she were here.

L. Ha. A good, intelligent, arch fellow this [*Aside.*]—But were not you saying, my lord, you believed Lady Brumpton would follow hither? If so, pray let me be gone.

Ld. H. No, madam, I must beseech your ladyship to stay, for there are things alleged against her which you, who have lived in the family, may perhaps give light into, and which I can't believe even she could be guilty of.

L. Ha. Nay, my lord, that's generous to a folly, for even for her usage of you (without regard to myself), I am ready to believe she would do anything that can come into the head of a close, malicious, cruel, designing woman.

Enter BOY.

Boy. My Lady Brumpton's below.

L. Ha. I'll run, then.

Cam. No, no, stand your ground. You, a soldier's wife? Come, we'll rally her to death.

Ld. H. Prithee, entertain her a little, while I go in for a moment's thought on this occasion. [*Exit.*

L. Ha. She has more wit than us both.

Cam. Pshaw, no matter for that; be sure, as soon as the sentence is out of my mouth, to clap in with something else; and laugh at all I say. I'll be grateful, and burst myself at my pretty, witty wife. We'll fall in slap upon her; she shan't have time to say a word of the running away.

Enter LADY BRUMPTON *and* TRUSTY.

Oh, my Lady Brumpton, your ladyship's most obedient servant: This is my Lady Harriot Campley. Why, madam, your ladyship is immediately in your mourning. Nay, as you have more wit than anybody, so (what seldom wits have) you have more prudence, too. Other widows have nothing in a readiness but a second husband; but you, I see, had your very weeds and dress lying by you.

L. Ha. Ay, madam; I see your ladyship is of the Order of Widowhood, for you have put on the habit.

Wid. I see your ladyship is not of the profession of virginity, for you have lost the look on't.

Cam. You are in the habit—That was so pretty; nay, without flattery, Lady Harriot, you have a great deal of wit. Ha! ha! ha!

L. Ha. No, my Lady Brumpton here is the woman of wit; but, indeed, she has but little enough, considering how much her ladyship has to defend. Ha! ha! ha!

Wid. I am sorry, madam, your ladyship has not what's sufficient for your occasions, or that this pretty gentleman can't supply 'em ——

[CAMPLEY *dancing about and trolling.*

Hey, day! I find, sir, your heels are a great help to your head. They relieve your wit, I see; and I don't question but ere now they have been as kind to your valour. Ha! ha!

Cam. Pox, I can say nothing; 'tis always thus with

your endeavours to be witty [*Aside.*]—I saw, madam, your mouth go, but there could be nothing offered in answer to what my Lady Harriot said.—'Twas home —'Twas cutting satire.

L. Ha. Oh, Mr. Campley! But pray, madam, has Mr. Cabinet visited your ladyship since this calamity? How stands that affair now?

Wid. Nay, madam, if you already want instructions, I'll acquaint you how the world stands, if you are in distress—but I fear Mr. Campley overhears us.

Cam. And all the tune the pipers played was Toll-toll-doroll. I swear, Lady Harriot, were I not already yours, I could have a tender for this lady.

Wid. Come, good folks, I find we are very free with each other. What makes you two here? Do you board my lord, or he you? Come, come, ten shillings a head will go a great way in a family. What do you say, Mrs. Campley, is it so? Does your ladyship go to market yourself? Nay, you're in the right of it. Come, can you imagine what makes my lord stay? He is not now with his land-steward. Not signing leases, I hope? Ha! ha! ha!

Cam. Hang her, to have more tongue than a man and his wife too. [*Aside.*

Enter LORD HARDY.

Ld. H. Because your ladyship is, I know, in very much pain in company you have injured, I'll be short —Open those doors—There lies your husband's, my father's body; and by you stands the man accuses you of poisoning him.

Wid. Of poisoning him!

Tru. The symptoms will appear upon the corpse.

Ld. H. But I am seized by nature—How shall I view, a breathless lump of clay, him whose high veins conveyed to me this vital force and motion?

I cannot bear that sight—
I am as fixed and motionless as he—
[*They open the coffin, out of which jumps* LADY SHARLOT.[1]
Art thou the ghastly shape my mind had formed?
Art thou the cold, inanimate—bright maid?
Thou giv'st new higher life to all around.
Whither does fancy, fired with love, convey me?
Whither transported by my pleasing fury?
The season vanishes at thy approach;
'Tis morn, 'tis spring—
Daisies and lillies strow thy flowery way.
Why is my fair unmoved—my heavenly fair?
Does she but smile at my exalted rapture?
L. Sh. Oh! sense of praise, to me unfelt before,
Speak on, speak on, and charm my attentive ear.
How sweet applause is from an honest tongue!
Thou lov'st my mind—hast well affection placed;
In what, nor time, nor age, nor care, nor want can alter.
Oh, how I joy in thee, my eternal lover;
Immutable as the object of thy flame!
I love, I am proud, I triumph that I love.
Pure, I approach thee; nor did I with empty shows,
Gorgeous attire, or studied negligence,
Or song, or dance, or ball, allure thy soul;
Nor want, or fear, such arts to keep or lose it:
Nor now with fond reluctance doubt to enter
My spacious, bright abode, this gallant heart.[2]
[*Reclines on* HARDY.

[1] Genest (*Account of the English Stage*) suggests that the idea of Lady Sharlot's escape was taken from Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, Act V., Sc. III.

[2] Eusden, in a complimentary poem "To the Author of the *Tatler*," printed in Nichols' *Collection of Poems*, iv. 152—4, thus expressed himself:—

"O Charlotte! who thy character can read,
But soon must languish, sigh, and secret bleed?
* * * * *
To wealth, to power, I every wish resign,
If only that dear Charlotte might be mine."

L. Ha. Ay, marry, these are high doings indeed; the greatness of the occasion has burst their passion into speech. Why, Mr Campley, when we are near these fine folks, you and I are but mere sweethearts. I protest I'll never be won so; you shall begin again with me.

Cam. Prithee, why dost name us poor animals? They have forgot there are such creatures as their old acquaintance Tom and Harriot.

Ld. H. So we did indeed, but you'll pardon us.

Cam. My lord, I never thought to see the minute wherein I should rejoice at your forgetting me, but now I do heartily. [*Embracing.*

L. Sh. Harriot.
L. Ha. Sharlot. } [*Embracing.*]

Wid. Sir, you're at the bottom of all this; I see you're skilled at close conveyances. I'll know the meaning instantly of these intricacies. 'Tis not your seeming honesty and gravity shall save you from your deserts. My husband's death was sudden. You and the burial fellow were observed very familiar. Produce my husband's body, or I'll try you for his murder; which I find you'd put on me, thou hellish engine!

Tru. Look you, madam, I could answer you, but I scorn to reproach people in misery. You're undone, madam.

Wid. What does the dotard mean? Produce the body, villain, or the law shall have thine for it. [TRUSTY *exit hastily.*]—Do you design to let the villain escape? How justly did your father judge, that made you a beggar with that spirit! You meant just now you could not bear the company of those you'd injured.

Ld. H. You are a woman, madam, and my father's widow. But sure you think you've highly injured me.

[*Here* LORD BRUMPTON *and* TRUSTY *half enter and observe.*

Wid. No, sir, I have not, will not, injure you. I

must obey the will of my deceased lord to a tittle; I must justly pay legacies. Your father, in consideration that you were his blood, would not wholly alienate you. He left you, sir, this shilling, with which estate you now are Earl of Brumpton.

Ld. H. Insolent woman! it was not me my good father disinherited; 'twas him you represented. The guilt was thine; he did an act of justice.

LORD BRUMPTON, *entering with* TRUSTY.

Ld. B. Oh, unparalleled goodness!

TATTLEAID *and* MADEMOISELLE *at the other door entering.*

Tru. Oh! Tattleaid, his and our hour is come.

Wid. What do I see? My lord, my master, husband, living?

Ld. B. [*Turning from her, running to his son.*] Oh, my boy, my son. Mr. Campley, Sharlot, Harriot! [*All kneeling to him.*] Oh, my children! Oh, oh! These passions are too strong for my old frame. Oh, the sweet torture! my son! my son! I shall expire in the too mighty pleasure! my boy!

Ld. H. A son, an heir, a bridegroom in one hour! Oh! grant me, Heaven, grant me moderation!

Wid. A son, an heir! Am I neglected then?
What? can my lord revive, yet dead to me?
Only to me deceased—to me alone,
Deaf to my sighs, and senseless to my moan?

Ld. B. 'Tis so long since I have seen plays, good madam, that I know not whence thou dost repeat, nor can I answer.

Wid. You can remember, though, a certain settlement, in which I am thy son and heir. Great noble, that's I suppose not taken from a play? That's as irrevocable as law can make it, that if you scorn me, your death and life are equal; or I'll still wear my mourning 'cause you're living.

Tru. Value her not, my lord; a prior obligation made you incapable of settling on her, your wife.

Ld. B. Thy kindness, Trusty, does distract thee. I would indeed disengage myself by any honest means, but, alas, I know no prior gift that avoids this to her—Oh, my child!

Tru. Look you, madam, I'll come again immediately. Be not troubled, my dear lords—— [*Exit.*

Cam. Trusty looks very confident; there is some good in that.

Re-enter TRUSTY *with* CABINET.

Cab. What, my Lord Brumpton living? nay then——

Tru. Hold, sir, you must not stir, nor can you, sir, retract this for your hand-writing.—My lord, this gentleman, since your supposed death, has lurked about the house to speak with my lady, or Tattleaid, who upon your decease have shunned him, in hopes, I suppose, to buy him off for ever. Now, as he was prying about, he peeped into your closet, where he saw your lordship reading. Struck with horror, and believing himself (as well he might) the disturber of your ghost for alienation of your fortune from your family, he writ me this letter, wherein he acknowledges a private marriage with this lady, half a year before you ever saw her.

All. How? [*All turn upon her disdainfully.*

Wid. No more a widow then, but still a wife.

[*Recovering from her confusion.*

I am thy wife—thou author of my evil.
Thou must partake with me an homely board,
An homely board that never shall be cheerful;
But every meal embittered with upbraidings.
Thou that could'st tell me, good and ill were words,
When thou could'st basely let me to another,
Yet could'st see sprights, great unbeliever!
Coward! Bug-beared penitent——

Stranger henceforth to all my joys, my joys
To thy dishonour; despicable thing,
Dishonour thee? Thou voluntary cuckold.

[CABINET *sneaks off*, WIDOW *flings after him*, TATTLEAID *following*.

Ld. B. I see you're all confused as well as I. Ye are my children, I hold you all so; and for your own use will speak plainly to you. I cannot hate that woman; nor shall she ever want. Though I scorn to bear her injuries, yet had I ne'er been roused from that low passion to a worthless creature, but by disdain of her attempt on my friend's child. I am glad that scorn's confirmed by her being that fellow's, whom, for my own sake, I only will contemn. Thee, Trusty, how shall we prosecute with equal praise and thanks for this great revolution in our house?

Tru. Never to speak on't more, my lord.

Ld. B. You are now, gentlemen, going into cares at a crisis[1] in your country.

And on this great occasion, Tom, I'll mount
Old Campley which thy father gave me,
And attend thee a cheerful gay old man,
Into the field to represent our county.
My rough plebeian Britons, not yet slaves
To France, shall mount thy father's son
Upon their shoulders. Echo loud their joy,
While I and Trusty follow weeping after:
But be thou honest, firm, impartial,
Let neither love, nor hate, nor faction move thee,[2]
Distinguish words from things, and men from crimes;

[1] A favourite word with Steele. In the first scene of the play Sable says: "There's a what d'ye call, a crisis." In 1714, Steele wrote a famous pamphlet called *The Crisis*. "Plebeian Britons," five lines below, reminds us of his four pamphlets, *The Plebeian*, on the Peerage Bill of 1719.

[2] Steele always maintained in his own political career the honest independent attitude here recommended.

Punctual be thou in payments, nor basely
Screen thy faults 'gainst law, behind the
Laws thou makest——
But thou against my death, must learn à supererogatory morality. [*To* LORD HARDY.
As he is to be just, be generous thou:
Nor let thy reasonable soul be struck
With sounds and appellations; title is
No more, if not significant
Of something that's superior in thyself
To other men, of which thou may'st be
Conscious, yet not proud—But if you swerve
From higher virtue than the crowd possess,
Know, they that call thee honourable mock thee.
You are to be a Peer, by birth a judge
Upon your honour, of others' lives and fortunes;
Because that honour's dearer than your own.
Be good, my son, and be a worthy lord
For when our shining virtues bless mankind,
We disappoint the livid malcontents,
Who long to call our noble Order useless.
Our all's in danger, sir, nor shall you dally
Your youth away with your fine wives.
No, in your country's cause you shall meet death,
While feeble we with minds resigned do wait it.

Not but I intend your nuptials as soon as possible, to draw entails and settlements. How necessary such things are, I had like to have been a fatal instance.

Cam. But, my lord, here are a couple that need not wait such ceremonies. Please but to sit; you've been extremely moved, and must be tired. You say we must not spend our time in dalliance; you'll see, my lord, the entertainment reminds us also of nobler things, and what I designed for my own wedding I'll compliment the general with. The bride dances finely. Trim, will you dance with her?

Trim. I will, but I can't. There's a countryman of hers without, by accident.

Cam. Ay, but is he a dancer?

Trim. Is a Frenchman a dancer? Is a Welshman a gentleman? I'll bring him in.

[*Here a dance and the following songs.*

Set by MR. DANIEL PURCELL.[1]

Sung by JEMMIE BOWIN.

I.

On yonder bed supinely laid,
Behold thy loved expecting maid:
In tremor, blushes, half in tears,
Much, much she wishes, more she fears.
Take, take her to thy faithful arms,
Hymen bestows thee all her charms.

II.

Heaven to thee bequeaths the fair,
To raise thy joy, and lull thy care;
Heaven made grief, if mutual, cease,
But joy, divided, to increase:
To mourn with her exceeds delight,
Darkness with her, the joys of light.

Sung by MR. PATE.

I.

Arise, arise, great dead, for arms renowned,
Rise from your urns, and save your dying story,
Your deeds will be in dark oblivion drowned,
For mighty William seizes all your glory.

[1] Daniel Purcell, brother of the great musician, Henry Purcell, was appointed organist of Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1686, and of St. Andrew's, Holborn, in 1713. He composed the music for an opera by George Powell, and died in 1717.

II.

Again the British trumpet sounds,
Again Britannia bleeds;
To glorious death, or comely wounds,
Her godlike monarch leads.

III.

Pay us, kind fate, the debt you owe,
Celestial minds from clay untie,
Let coward spirits dwell below,
And only give the brave to die.

Ld. B. Now, gentlemen, let the miseries which I have but miraculously escaped, admonish you to have always inclinations proper for the stage of life you're in. Don't follow love when nature seeks but ease; otherwise you'll fall into a lethargy of your dishonour, when warm pursuits of glory are over with you; for fame and rest are utter opposites.

You who the path of honour make your guide,
Must let your passion with your blood subside;
And no untimed ambition, love, or rage
Employ the moments of declining age;
Else boys will in your presence lose their fear,
And laugh at the grey-head they should revere.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by LORD HARDY.

LOVE, hope and fear, desire, aversion, rage,
All that can move the soul, or can assuage,
Are drawn in miniature of life, the stage.
Here you can view yourselves, and here is shown
To what you're born in sufferings not your own.
The stage to wisdom's no fantastic way,
Athens herself learned virtue at a play.
Our author me to-night a soldier drew,
But faintly writ, what warmly you pursue:
To his great purpose, had he equal fire,
He'd not aim to please only, but inspire;
He'd sing what hovering fate attends our isle,
And from base pleasure rouse to glorious toil:
Full time the earth to a new decision brings;
While William gives the Roman eagle wings:
With arts and arms shall Britain tamely end,
Which naked Picts so bravely could defend?
The painted heroes on th' invaders press,
And think their wounds addition to their dress;
In younger years we've been with conquest blest,
And Paris has the British yoke confessed;
Is't then in England, in lost England, known,
Her kings are named from a revolted throne?
But we offend—You no examples need,
In imitation of yourselves proceed;

'Tis you your country's honour must secure,
By all your actions worthy of Namur:
With gentle fires your gallantry improve,
Courage is brutal, if untouched with love:
If soon our utmost bravery's not displayed,
Think that bright circle must be captives made;
Let thoughts of saving them our toils beguile,
And they reward our labours with a smile.

THE LYING LOVER:

OR

THE LADIES' FRIENDSHIP.

"Hæc nôsse salus est adolescentulis." [1]—TERTULLIAN.

[1] To have known these things is safety to the young.

THE *Lying Lover: or the Ladies' Friendship*, a Comedy, was acted at Drury Lane Theatre on December 2, 1703, and ran for six nights. It was published by Bernard Lintot on January 26, 1704. Wilks (Bookwit, jun.), Mills (Lovemore), Cibber (Latine), Pinkethman (Storm), and Bullock (Charcoal), together with Mrs. Oldfield (Victoria), and Mrs. Rogers (Penelope), acted in this piece, which, so far as is known, has been revived only once (April 4, 1746) since it was originally produced. The plot was taken from *Le Menteur*, by Corneille, who had borrowed from Ruiz de Alarcon's *Verdad Sospechosa*. Steele is, of course, solely responsible for the scenes in Newgate towards the end of the piece. Samuel Foote afterwards made much use of Steele's play in his *Liar*.

To His Grace the

DUKE OF ORMOND.[1]

My Lord,

UT of gratitude to the memorable and illustrious patron of my infancy,[2] your Grace's grandfather, I presume to lay this Comedy at your feet. The design of it is to banish out of conversation all entertainment which does not proceed from simplicity of mind, good-nature, friendship, and honour. Such a purpose will not, I hope, be unacceptable to so great a lover of mankind as your Grace; and if your patronage can recommend it to all who love and honour the Duke of Ormond, its reception will be as extensive as the world itself.

'Twas the irresistible force of this humanity in your temper that has carried you through the various successes of war, with the peculiar and undisputed distinction that you have drawn your sword without other motive than a

[1] James, second Duke of Ormond, was in command of the expedition against Spain in 1702, when there were successes at Cadiz, Vigo, etc.; great booty was taken, and many galleons were sunk. Steele alludes below to this "wealth of the Indies." On February 4, 1703, the Duke was made Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

[2] James Butler, first Duke of Ormond. Steele's uncle and guardian, Henry Gascoigne, was the Duke's secretary, and had obtained, through his employer, a place upon the foundation of the Charterhouse for Steele. Four years later (1688) the Duke died, and was succeeded by his grandson.

passionate regard for the glory of your country; since before you entered into its service, you were possessed of its highest honours, but could not be contented with the illustrious rank your birth gave you, without repeating the glorious actions by which it was acquired.

But there cannot be less expected from the son of an Ossory, than to contemn life, to adorn it, and with munificence, affability, scorn of gain, and passion for glory, to be the honour and example to the profession of arms; all which engaging qualities your noble family has exerted with so steadfast a loyalty, that in the most adverse fortune of our monarchy, popularity, which in others had been invidious, was a security to the Crown, when lodged in the House of Ormond.

Thus your Grace entered into the business of the world with so great an expectation, that it seemed impossible there could be anything left which might still conduce to the honour of your name. But the most memorable advantage your country has gained this century was obtained under your command; and Providence thought fit to give the wealth of the Indies into his hands, who only could despise it; while, with a superior generosity, he knows no reward but in opportunities of bestowing. The great personage whom you succeed in your honours, made me feel, before I was sensible of the benefit, that this glorious bent of mind is hereditary to you. I hope, therefore, you will pardon me, that I take the liberty of expressing my veneration for his remains, by assuring your Grace that I am,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient

And most devoted

Humble Servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

THE PREFACE.

THOUGH it ought to be the care of all Governments that public representations should have nothing in them but what is agreeable to the manners, laws, religion, and policy of the place or nation in which they are exhibited; yet is it the general complaint of the more learned and virtuous amongst us, that the English stage has extremely offended in this kind. I thought, therefore, it would be an honest ambition to attempt a Comedy which might be no improper entertainment in a Christian commonwealth.

In order to this, the spark of this play is introduced with as much agility and life as he brought with him from France, and as much humour as I could bestow upon him in England. But he uses the advantages of a learned education, a ready fancy, and a liberal fortune, without the circumspection and good sense which should always attend the pleasures of a gentleman; that is to say, a reasonable creature.

Thus he makes false love, gets drunk, and kills man; but in the fifth Act awakes from his debauch, with

the compunction and remorse which is suitable to a man's finding himself in a gaol for the death of his friend, without his knowing why.

The anguish he there expresses, and the mutual sorrow between an only child and a tender father in that distress, are, perhaps, an injury to the rules of comedy, but I am sure they are a justice to those of morality. And passages of such a nature being so frequently applauded on the stage, it is high time that we should no longer draw occasions of mirth from those images which the religion of our country tells us we ought to tremble at with horror.

But her Most Excellent Majesty has taken the stage into her consideration;[1] and we may hope, by her gracious influence on the Muses, wit will recover from its apostasy; and that, by being encouraged in the interests of virtue, it will strip vice of the gay habit in which it has too long appeared, and clothe it in its native dress of shame, contempt, and dishonour.

[1] On the 13th of January, 1704, one week before the publication of this play, the Queen issued an Order for the regulation of the playhouses, prohibiting them from acting anything contrary to religion and good manners (Salmon's *Chronological Historian*).

PROLOGUE.

All the commanding powers that awe mankind
Are in a trembling poet's audience joined,
Where such bright galaxies of beauty sit,
And at their feet assembled men of wit:
Our author, therefore, owns his deep despair
To entertain the learned or the fair;
Yet hopes that both will so much be his friends,
To pardon what he does, for what he intends;
He aims to make the coming action move
On the dread laws of friendship and of love;
Sure then he'll find but very few severe,
Since there's of both so many objects here.
He offers no gross vices to your sight,
Those too much horror raise for just delight;
And to detain the attentive knowing ear,
Pleasure must still have something that's severe.[1]
If then you find our author treads the stage
With just regard to a reforming age;
He hopes, he humbly hopes, you'll think there's due
Mercy to him, for justice done to you.

[1] This line is repeated from Steele's *Procession*, 1695.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Old Bookwit.
Young Bookwit, the "Lying Lover."
Lovemore, in love with Penelope.
Frederick, Friend to Lovemore.
Latine, Friend to Young Bookwit.
Storm, a Highwayman.
Charcoal, an Alchemist and Coiner.
Simon, Servant to Penelope.
Penelope.
Victoria, Friend to Penelope.
Betty, Victoria's Woman.
Lettice, Penelope's Woman.

Constables, Watch, Turnkey, Cookmaid, and several Gaol-birds.

SCENE—London.

Mr. Cibber

THE LYING LOVER:

OR

THE LADIES' FRIENDSHIP.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE.—*St. James's Park.*

Enter YOUNG BOOKWIT *and* LATINE.

LATINE. But have you utterly left Oxford?

Y. Book. For ever, sir, for ever; my father has given me leave to come to town, and I don't question but will let my return be in my own choice. But Jack, you know we were talking in Maudlen Walks last week of the necessity, in intrigues, of a faithful, yet a prating servant. We agreed, therefore, to cast lots who should be the other's footman for the present expedition. Fortune, that's always blind, gave me the superiority.

Lat. She shall be called no more so, for that one

action. And I am, sir, in a literal sense, your very humble servant.

Y. Book. Begin, then, the duty of a useful valet, and flatter me egregiously. Has the fellow fitted me? How is my manner? my mien? Do I move freely? Have I kicked off the trammels of a gown? or does not the tail on't seem still tucked under my arm, where my hat is, with a pert jerk forward, and little hitch in my gait like a scholastic beau? This wig, I fear, looks like a cap.

Lat. No, faith, it looks like a cap and gown too; though at the same time you look as if you ne'er had worn either.

Y. Book. But my sword, does it hang careless? Do I look bold, negligent, and erect? that is, do I look as if I could kill a man without being out of humour? I horridly mistrust myself. Am I military enough in my air? I fancy people see I understand Greek. Don't I pore a little in my visage? Han't I a down bookish lour, a wise sadness? I don't look gay enough and unthinking, I fancy.

Lat. I protest you wrong yourself. You look very brisk and very ignorant.

Y. Book. O fie! I am afraid you flatter me.

Lat. I don't indeed; I'll be hanged if my tutor would know either of us. But, good master, to what use do you design to put the noble arts and sciences he taught us? The conduct of our lives, the government of our passions, were his daily talk to us, good man!

Y. Book. Good man! Why I'll obey his precepts, but abridge 'em. For as he used to advise me, I'll contract my thoughts, as I'll tell you, Jack:—for the passions, I'll turn 'em all into that one dear passion, love; and when that's the only torture of my heart, I'll give that tortured heart quite away; deny there's any such thing as pain, and turn stoic a shorter way than e'er thy tutor taught thee. This is the new philosophy, you rogue you.

Lat. But you would not in earnest be thought wholly illiterate?

Y. Book. No; for as when I walk, I'd have you know by my motion I can dance; so when I speak, I'd have you see I read: yet would ordinarily neither cut capers nor talk sentences. But you prate as if I came to town to get an employment. No; hang business, hang care; let it live and prosper among the men; I'll ne'er go near the solemn ugly things again. I'll keep company with none but ladies — bright ladies. O London! London! O woman! woman! I am come where thou livest, where thou shinest.

Lat. Hey-day! why, were there no women in Oxford?

Y. Book. No, no; why, do you think a bed-maker's a woman?

Lat. Yes, and thought you knew it.

Y. Book. No, no, 'tis no such thing. As he that is not honest or brave is no man; so she that is not witty or fair is no woman. No, no, Jack, to come up to that high name and object of desire, she must be gay and chaste, she must at once attract, and banish you. I don't know how to express myself, but a woman, methinks, is a being between us and angels. She has something in her that at the same time gives awe and invitation; and I swear to you I was never out in 't yet, but I always judged of men as I observed they judged of women. There's nothing shows a man so much as the object of his affections.—But what do you stare at so considerately?

Lat. Faith, sir, I am wondering at you—how 'tis possible you could be so jaunty a town-spark in a moment, and have so easy a behaviour. I look, methinks, to you, as if I were really your footman.

Y. Book. Why, if you're serious in what you say, I owe it wholly to the indulgence of an excellent father, in

whose company I was always free and unconstrained. But what's this to ladies, Jack, to ladies? I was going to tell you I had studied 'em, and know how to make my approaches to 'em by contemplating their frame, their inmost temper. I don't ground my hopes on the scandalous tales and opinions your wild fellows have of 'em—fellows that are but mere bodies, machines—which at best can but move gracefully. No; I draw my pretences from philosophy—from nature.

Lat. You'll give us by-and-by a lecture over your mistress: you can dissect her.

Y. Book. That I can, indeed, and have so accurately observed on woman, that I can know her mind by her eye as well as her doctor shall her health by her pulse; I can read approbation through a glance of disdain; can see when the soul is divided by a sparkling tear that twinkles and betrays the heart. A sparkling tear's the dress and livery of love—of love made up of hope and fear, of joy and grief.

Lat. [1] But what have the wars to do with all this? Why must you needs commence soldier all of a sudden?

[1] *Cliton.* Qu'a de propre la guerre à montrer votre flamme?
Dorante. O le beau compliment à charmer une dame,
De lui dire d'abord: "J'apporte à vos beautés
Un cœur nouveau-venu des universités;
Si vous avez besoin de lois et de rubriques,
Je sais le Code entier avec les Authentiques,
Le Digeste nouveau, le vieux, l'Infortiat,
Ce qu'en a dit Jason, Balde, Accurse, Alciat!"
Qu'un si riche discours nous rend considerables!
Qu'on amollit par là de cœurs inexorables!
Qu'un homme à paragraphe est un joli galant!
On s'introduit bien mieux à titre de vaillant:
Tout le secret ne gît qu'en un peu de grimace,
A mentir à propos, jurer de bonne grâce,
Étaler force mots qu'elles n'entendent pas;
Faire sonner Lamboy, Jean de Vert, et Galas;
Nommer quelques châteaux de qui les noms barbares,
Plus ils blessent l'oreille, et plus leur semblent rares;
Avoir toujours en bouche angles, lignes, fossés,
Vedette, contrescarpe, et travaux avancés:
Sans ordre et sans raison, n'importe, on les étonne;

Y. Book. Were 't not a taking compliment with my college face and phrase to accost a lady:—"Madam, I bring your ladyship a learned heart, one newly come from the University. If you want definitions, axioms, and arguments, I am an able schoolman. I've read Aristotle twice over, compared his jarring commentators too, examined all the famous peripatetics, know where the Scotists and the Nominals differ:"—this, certainly, must needs enchant a lady.

Lat. This is too much on th' other side.

Y. Book. The name of soldier bids you better welcome. 'Tis valour and feats done in the field a man should be cried up for; nor is 't so hard to achieve.

Lat. The fame of it, you mean?

Y. Book. Yes; and that will serve. 'Tis but looking big, bragging with an easy grace, and confidently mustering up an hundred hard names they understand not: Thunder out Villeroy, Catinat, and Boufflers; speak of strange towns and castles, whose barbarous names, the harsher they're to the ear, the rarer and more taking; still running over lines, trenches, outworks, counterscarps, and forts, citadels, mines, countermines, pickeering, pioneers, sentinels, patrols, and others, without sense or order; that matters not, the women are amazed, they admire to hear you rap 'em out so readily; and many a one that went no farther for it, retailing handsomely some warlike terms, passes for a brave fellow. Don't stand gaping, but live and learn, my lad. I can tell thee ten thousand arts to make thee known and valued in these regions of wit and gallantry—the park, the playhouse.

Lat. Now you put me in mind where we are. What have we to do here thus early, now there's no company?

> On leur fait admirer les baies qu'on leur donne:
> Et tel à la faveur d'un semblable débit,
> Passe pour homme illustre, et se met en crédit.
> (*Le Menteur*, Act I. Scene VI.

Y. Book. Oh! sir, I have put on so much of the soldier with my red coat, that I came here to observe the ground I am to engage upon. Here must I act, I know, some lover's part, and therefore came to view this pleasant walk. I privately rambled to town last November. Here, ay here, I stood and gazed at high Mall, till I forgot it was winter, so many pretty shes marched by me. Oh! to see the dear things trip, trip along, and breathe so short, nipt with the season! I saw the very air not without force leave their dear lips. Oh! they were intolerably handsome.

Lat. You'll see, perhaps, such to-day; but how to come at 'em?

Y. Book. Ay, there's it, how to come at 'em.

Lat.[1] Are you generous?

Y. Book. I think I am no niggard.

Lat. You must entertain them high, and bribe all about them. They talk of Ovid and his Art of Loving; be liberal, and you outdo his precepts. The art of love, sir, is the art of giving. Be free to women, they'll be free to you. Not every open-handed fellow hits it neither. Some give by lapfulls, and yet ne'er oblige. The manner, you know, of doing a thing is more than the thing itself. Some drop a jewel, which had been refused if bluntly offered.

Y. Book. Some lose at play what they design a present.

Lat. Right; the skill is to be generous, and seem not to know it of yourself, 'tis done with so much ease; but a liberal blockhead presents his mistress as he'd give an alms.

Y. Book. Leaving such blockheads to their deserved ill-fortune, tell me if thou know'st these ladies?

Lat. No, not I, sir; they are above an academic

[1] This dialogue, down to the exit of Latine, is based upon *Le Menteur*, I. i.

converse many degrees. I've seen ten thousand verses writ in the University on wenches not fit to be either of their handmaids. I never spoke to such a fine thing as either in my whole life—I'm downright asleep o' sudden. I must fall back, and glad it is my place to do so; yet I can get you intelligence perhaps. I'll to the footman.

Y. Book. Do you think he'll tell?

Lat. He would not to you, perhaps, but to a brother footman. Do but listen at the entrance of the Mall at noon, and you'll have all the ladies' characters in town among their lackeys. You know all fame begins from our domestics.

Y. Book. That was a wise man's observation. Follow him, and know what you can. [*Exit* LATINE.

Enter PENELOPE, VICTORIA, SIMON, *and* LETTICE.

Pen. A walk round would be too much for us; we'll keep the Mall.—But to our talk: I must confess I have terrors when I think of marrying Lovemore. He is, indeed, a man of an honest character. He has my good opinion, but love does not always follow that. He is so wise a fellow, always so precisely in the right, so observing and so jealous; he's blameless indeed, but not to be commended. What good he has, has no grace in it; he's one of those who's never highly moved, except to anger. Give me a man that has agreeable faults rather than offensive virtues.

Vict. Offensive virtues, madam?

Pen. Yes, I don't know how—there's a sort of virtue, or prudence, or what you'll call it, that we can but just approve. That does not win us. Lovemore wants that fire, that conversation-spirit I would have. They say he's learned as well as discreet, but I'm no judge of that. I'm sure he's no woman's scholar; his wisdom he should turn into wit, and his learning into poetry or humour.

Vict. Well, I'm not so much of your mind; I like a sober passion.

Pen. A sober passion! you took me up just now when I said an offensive virtue.—Bless me!

[*Stumbling almost to a fall.*

Y. Book.[1] [*Catching her.*] How much am I indebted to an accident, that favours me with an occasion of this small service! for 'tis to me an happiness beyond expression thus to kiss your hand.

Pen. The occasion, methinks, is not so obliging, nor the happiness you mention worth that name, sir.

Y. Book. 'Tis true, madam, I owe it all to fortune; neither your kindness nor my industry had any share in 't. Thus am I still as wretched as I was, for this happiness I so much prize had doubtless been refused my want of merit.

Pen. It has very soon, you see, lost what you valued in it; but I find you and I, sir, have a different sense; for, in my opinion, we enjoy with most pleasure what we attain with least merit. Merit is a claim, and may pretend justly to favour; when without it what's conferred is more unexpected, and therefore more pleasing.

Y. Book. You talk very well, madam, of an happiness you can't possibly be acquainted with, the enjoying without desert. But indeed you have done me a very singular good office, in letting me know myself very much qualified for felicity.

Vict. I swear he's a very pretty fellow, and how readily the thing talks! I begin to pity Lovemore, but I begin to hate Penelope. How he looks! he looks at her!

Y. Book.[2] But judge, madam, what the condition of a passionate man must be, that can approach the hand only of her he dies for, when her heart is inaccessible.

[1] The four following speeches are a free translation from *Le Menteur*, I. ii.

[2] From *Le Menteur*, I. ii

Pen. 'Tis very well the heart lies not so easily to be seized as the hand—I find—— Pray, sir—I don't know what there is in this very odd fellow: I'm not angry, though he's downright rude—but I must——

Y. Book. But your heart, madam, your heart—

[*Pressingly.*

Pen. You seemed, sir, I must confess, to have shown a ready civility when I'd like to fall just now, for which I could not but thank you, and permit you to say what you pleased on that occasion—"But your heart, madam!" 'tis a sure sign, sir, you know not me; or, if you are what indeed you seem—a gentleman—sure you forget yourself, or rather you talk, by memory, a form or cant which you mistake for something that's gallant.

Y. Book. Madam, I very humbly beg your pardon, if I pressed too far and too abruptly. I forgot, indeed, that I broke through decencies, and that though you have been long a familiar to me, I am a stranger to you.

Pen. Pray, familiar stranger, what can you mean? I never saw you before this instant, nor you me, I believe.

Y. Book.[1] Perhaps not, that you know of, madam, for your humility, it seems, makes you so little sensible of your own perfection, that you overlook your conquest; nor have you e'er observed me, though I hover day and night about your lodging, haunt you from place to place, at balls, in the park, at church. I gave you all the serenades you've had, yet never till this minute could I find you, and this minute an unfortunate one—But this is always my luck when I'm out of the field.

Vict. You've travelled then, and seen the wars, sir?

Y. Book. I—madam—I—all that I know of the matter is, that Louis the Fourteenth mortally hates me. They talk of French gold—what heaps have I refused! Yet to be generous even to an enemy, I must allow that Prince

[1] The general idea of the ensuing dialogue, down to the exit of the ladies, is taken from *Le Menteur*, I. iii.

has reason for his rancour to me. There has not been a skirmish, siege, or battle since I bore arms, I made not one in; no, nor the least advantage got of the enemy, but I had my share, though perhaps not all my share of the glory. You've seen my name, though you don't know it, often in the *Gazette.*

Pen. I never read news.

Enter LATINE.

Lat. What tale's he telling now, tro'?

Y. Book. You've never heard, I suppose, of such names as Ruremonde, Kaiserswerth, and Liege? nor read of an English gentleman left dead by his precipitancy upon a parapet at Venloo? I was thought so indeed, when the first account came away. Every man has his failings; rashness is my fault.

Lat. Don't you remember a certain place called Oxford among your towns, sir?

Y. Book. Pshaw, away—Oh! oh!—I beg your pardon, ladies, this fellow knows I was shot in my left arm, and cannot bear the least touch, yet will still be rushing on me.

Lat. He has a lie, I think, in every joint. [*Aside.*

Pen. Do you bear any commission, sir?

Y. Book. There's an intimate of mine, a general officer, who has often said, Tom, if thou would'st but stick to any one application, thou might'st be anything. 'Tis my misfortune, madam, to have a mind too extensive. I began last summer's campaign with the renowned Prince Eugene, but was forced to fly into Holland for a duel with that rough Captain of the Hussars, Paul Diack. They talk of a regiment for me, but those things—besides, it will oblige me to attend it, and then I can't follow honour where'er she's busiest, but must be confined to one nation; when indeed 'tis rather my way of serving with such of our allies as most want me.

Pen. But I see you soldiers never enjoy such a thing as rest: You but come home in winter to turn your valour on the ladies—'tis but just a change of your warfare.

Y. Book. I had immediately returned to Holland, but your beauties at my arrival here disarmed me, madam, made me a man of peace, or raised a civil war within me rather. You took me prisoner at first sight, and to your charms I yielded up an heart, till then unconquered. Martial delights (once best and dearest to me) vanished before you in a moment, and all my thoughts grew bent to please and serve you.

Lett. Lovemore's in the walk, madam; he'll be in a fit.

Y. Book. Rob me o' the sudden thus of all my happiness! Yet ere you quite forsake me, authorise my passion, license my innocent flames, and give me leave to love such charming sweetness.

Pen. He that will love, and knows what 'tis to love, will ask no leave of any but himself. [*Exeunt* Ladies, *etc.*

Y. Book. Follow 'em, Jack.

Lat. I know as much of 'em already as needs: the footman was in his talking vein. The handsomer of the two, says he, I serve, and she lives in the Garden.

Y. Book. What Garden?

Lat. Covent Garden; the other lies there too. I did not stay to ask her name, but I shall meet him again; I took particular notice of the livery.

Y. Book. Ne'er trouble thyself to know which is which, my heart and my good genius tell me, 'tis she, that pretty she I talked to.

Lat. If, with respect to your worship's opinion, I might presume to be of a contrary one, I should think the other the handsomer now.

Y. Book. What, the dumb thing,[1] the picture?—No, love is the union of minds, and she that engages mine

[1] The dialogue thus far closely follows *Le Menteur*, I. iv.

must be very well able to express her own. But I suppose some scolding landlady has made you thus enamoured with silence. But here are two of the dearest of my old comrades—they seem amazed at something by their action.

Enter LOVEMORE *and* FREDERICK.

Fred.[1] How! a collation on the water, and music too?

Love. Yes, music and a collation.

Fred. Last night?

Love. Last night too.

Fred. An handsome treat?

Love. A very noble one.

Fred. Who gave it?

Love. That I'm yet to learn.

Y. Book. How happy am I to meet you here!

Love. When I embrace you thus, no happiness can equal mine. [*Saluting.*

Y. Book. I thrust myself intrudingly upon you; but you'll pardon a man o'erjoyed to see you.

Love. Where you're always welcome you never can intrude.

Y. Book. What were you talking of?

Love. Of an entertainment.

Y. Book. Given by some lover?

Love. As we suppose.

Y. Book. That circumstance deserves my curiosity, pray go on, and let me share the story.

Love. Some ladies had the fiddles last night.

Y. Book. Upon the water, too, methought you said?

Love. Yes, 'twas upon the water.

Y. Book. Water often feeds the flame.

Love. Sometimes.

[1] This passage, down to the end of Young Bookwit's description of the feast—"twelve dishes to a course"—is a literal translation from *Le Menteur*, I. v. The whole scene appears again in slightly varied form in Foote's *Liar*.

Y. Book. And by night too?

Love. Yes, last night.

Y. Book. He chose his time well—The lady is handsome?

Love. In most men's eyes she is.

Y. Book. And the music?

Love. Good, as we hear.

Y. Book. Some banquet followed?

Love. A sumptuous one, they say.

Y. Book. And neither of you all this while know who gave this treat? ha! ha!

Love. D'ye laugh at it?

Y. Book. How can I choose, to see you thus admire a slight divertisement I gave myself?

Love. You?

Y. Book. Even I!

Love. Why, have you got a mistress here already?

Y. Book. I should be sorry else. I've been in town this month or more, though for some reasons I appear but little yet by day. I' the dark o' the evening I peep out, and incognito make some visits. Thus had I spent my time but ill, were not——

Lat. [*To* Y. Book.] Do you know what you say, sir? Don't lay it on so thick.

Y. Book. [*To* Lat.] Nay, you must be sure to take care to be in the way as soon as they land, to shew upstairs—I beg pardon, I was giving my fellow some directions about receiving some women of quality that sup with me to-night incog——but you're my dearest friends, and shall hear all.

Fred. [*To* Love.] How luckily your rival discovers himself!

Y. Book. I took five barges, and the fairest kept for my company; the other four I filled with music of all sorts, and of all sorts the best; in the first were fiddles, in the next theorbo, lutes, and voices.

Flutes and such pastoral instruments i' th' third.
Loud music from the fourth did pierce the air.
Each concert vied by turns,
Which with most melody should charm our ears.
The fifth, the largest of 'em all, was neatly hung,
Not with dull tapestry, but with green boughs,
Curiously interlaced to let in air,
And every branch with jessamines, and orange posies decked;
In this the feast was kept.

Hither, with five other ladies, I led her whose beauty alone governs my destiny. Supper was served up straight; I will not trouble you with our bill of fare, what dishes were best liked, what sauces most recommended; 'tis enough I tell you this delicious feast was of six courses, twelve dishes to a course.

Lat. That's indeed enough of all conscience. [*Aside.*

Love. Oh, the torture of jealousy! [*Aside*]—But, sir, how seemed the lady to receive this entertainment? We must know that.

Y. Book. Oh! that was the height on't. She, I warrant you, was quite negligent of all this matter. You know their way, they must not seem to like—no, I warrant it would not so much as smile to make the fellow vain, and believe he had power to move delight in her—ha, ha!

Love. But how then?

Y. Book. Why you must know my humour grew poetic. I pulled off my sword-knot, and with that bound up a coronet of ivy, laurel, and flowers; with that round my temples, and a plate of richest fruits in my hand, on one knee I presented her with it as a cornucopia, an offering from her humble swain of all his harvest—to her the Ceres of our genial feast and rural mirth. She smiled; the ladies clapped their hands, and all our music struck sympathetic rapture at my happiness; while gentle winds, the river, air, and shore echoed the harmony in notes

more soft than they received it. Methought all nature seemed to die for love like me. To all my heart and every pulse beat time. Oh, the pleasures of successful love! ha, Lovemore! ha! What, hast thou got a good office lately? you're afraid I should make some request. Prithee ben't so shy, I have nothing to ask but of my mistress—What's the matter?

Love. I only attend, sir, I only attend—

Y. Book. Then I'll go on. As soon[1] as we had supped, the fireworks played. Squibs of all sorts were darted through the skies, whose spreading fires made a new day. A flaming deluge seemed to fall from Heaven, and with such violence attacked the waves, you would have thought the fiery element had left his sphere, to ruin his moist enemy. Their contest done, we landed, danced till day, which hasty Sol disturbed us with too soon. Had he taken our advice, or feared my anger, he might in Thetis's lap have slept as long as at Alcmena's labour he's reported. But steering not as we would have prescribed, he put a period to our envied mirth.

Love. Trust me, you tell us wonders, and with a grace as rare as the feast itself, which all our summer's mirth can't equal.

Y. Book. My mistress took me o'the sudden; I had not a day's warning.

Love. The treat was costly though, and finely ordered.

Y. Book. I was forced to take up with this trifle. He that wants time can't do as he would.

Love. Farewell, we shall meet again at more leisure.

Y. Book. Number me among your creatures.

Love. Oh jealousy! Thou rack, jealousy!

Fred. [*To* LOVE.] What reason have you to feel it? the circumstances of the feast nothing agree.

[1] The rest of the scene with Lovemore and Frederick is from *Le Menteur*, I. v.

Love. [*To* FRED.] In time and place they do; the rest is nothing. [*Exeunt* FRED. *and* LOVE.

Lat.[1] May I speak now, sir, without offence?

Y. Book. 'Tis in your choice now to speak or not, but before company you'll spoil all.

Lat. Do you walk abroad and talk in your sleep? or do you use to tell your dreams for current truth?

Y. Book. Dull brain!

Lat. Why, you beat out mine with your battles, your fireworks, your music, and your feasts. You've found an excellent way to go to the wars, and yet keep out of danger. Then you feast your mistresses at the cheapest rate that ever I knew! Why d'ye make 'em believe you ha' been here these six weeks?

Y. Book. My passion has the more growth, and I the better ground to make love.

Lat. You'd make one believe fine things, that would but hearken to you; but this lady might soon have found you out.

Y. Book. Some acquaintance I have got, however; this is making love, scholar, and at the best rate too.

Lat. To speak truth, I'm hardly come to myself yet; your great supper lies on my stomach still. I defy Pontack[2] to have prepared a better o'the sudden. Your

[1] The ensuing dialogue is an adaptation from *Le Menteur*, I, vi., down to Latine's mention of lying. The rest is Steele's.

[2] Pontack's was a French eating-house in Abchurch Lane, where the Royal Society held its annual dinners until 1746. Pontack was son of the President of the Parliament of Bordeaux, and gave the name to a famous French claret. Evelyn refers to him in his diary, 13 July, 1683, and 30 Nov., 1694, and Swift, in his Journal, 16 Aug., 1711: "Pontack told us, although his wine was so good, he sold it cheaper than others; he took but seven shillings a flask. Are not these pretty rates?" See, too, the prologue to *Love's Contrivances*, 1703, by Mrs. Centlivre:—

> "At Locket's, Brown's, and at Pontack's enquire,
> What modish kickshaws the nice beaus desire,
> What famed ragouts, what new-invented salad,
> Has best pretensions to regale the palate.
> If we present you with a medley here,

enchanted castles, where strangers found strange tables strangely furnished with strange cates, were but sixpenny ordinaries to the fifth barge; you were an excellent man to write romances, for having feasts and battles at command, your Quixote in a trice would over-run the world; revelling and skirmishing cost you nothing; then you vary your scene with so much ease, and shift from court to camp with such facility—

Y. Book. I love thus to outvie a newsmonger; and as soon as I perceive a fellow thinks his story will surprise, I choke him with a stranger, and stop his mouth with an extempore wonder. Did'st thou but know what a pleasure 'tis to cram their own news down their throats again!

Lat. 'Tis fine, but may prove dangerous sport, and may involve us in a peck of troubles. Prithee, Tom, consider that I am of quality to be kicked or caned by this l——

Y. Book. Hush, hush, call it not lying; as for my waging war, it is but just I snatch and steal from fortune that fame which she denies me opportunity to deserve. My father has cramped me in a college, while all the world has been in action. Then as to my lying to my mistress, 'tis but what all the lovers upon earth do. Call it not then by that coarse name, a lie. 'Tis wit, 'tis fable, allegory, fiction, hyperbole—or be it what you call it, the world's made up almost of nothing else. What are all the grave faces you meet in public? mere silent lies, dark solemn fronts, by which they would disguise vain

A hodge-podge dish served up in china-ware,
We hope 'twill please, 'cause like your bills of fare."

Pontack put up a picture of his father's head as a sign (Burn's *Descriptive Catalogue of the London Traders' Tavern, and Coffee-House Tokens*, 1855, p. 13). From a tract called *The Metamorphoses of the Town*, dated 1730, we learn that Pontack's was then the resort of extravagant epicures; in the bill of fare of a "guinea ordinary" are "a ragout of fatted snails," and "chickens not two hours from the shell."

empty silly noddles. But after all, to be serious, since I am resolved honestly to love, I don't care how artfully I obtain the woman I pitch upon; besides, did you ever know any of them acknowledge they loved as soon as they loved? No, they'll let a man dwell upon his knees—whom they languish to receive into their arms. They're no fair enemy. Therefore 'tis but just that—

We use all arts the fair to undermine,
And learn with gallantry to hide design. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—PENELOPE'S *Lodgings, Covent Garden.*

Enter OLD BOOKWIT, PENELOPE, *and* LETTICE.

OLD BOOK. Mistress Penelope, I have your father's leave to wait upon you, madam, and talk to you this morning; nay, to talk to you of marriage.

Pen. To talk to me of marriage, sir?

O. Book. Yes, madam, in behalf of my son, Tom Bookwit.

Pen. Nay, there may perhaps be something said to that. [*Aside.*

O. Book.[1] I sent for him from Oxford with that design. He came to town but yesterday; and, if a father can judge, he brings from a college the mien and air of a court. I love my son entirely, and hope, madam, you take my thoughts as to you, to be no want of respect to you.

Pen. 'Twere want of sense, sir, to do that.

O. Book. If I can remember my style to my mistress

[1] *Geronte.* Il vint hier de Poitiers, mais il sent peu l'école;
Et, si l'on pouvait croire un père à sa parole,
Quelque écolier qu'il soit, je dirais qu'aujourd'hui
Peu de nos gens de cour sont mieux taillés que lui.
(*Le Menteur*, II. ii.)

of old, I'll ease Tom's way, and raise her expectation of my son. [*Aside.*]—Madam, had I my hat, my feather, pantaloons, and jerkin on, as when I wooed your humble servant's mother, I would deliver you his errand. I married her just such a young thing as you; her complexion was charming, but not indeed with all your sweetness.

Pen. Oh! sir!

O. Book. Her neck and bosom were the softest pillows; her shape was not of that nice sort. Some young women suffer in shapes of their mother's making, by spare diet, straight lacing, and constant chiding. But 'twas the work of nature, free, unconstrained, healthy, and——But her charms had not all that emanation which your's have.

Pen. O fie! fie!

O. Book. Not those thousand thousand graces, that soft army of loves and zephyrs, millions of airy beings that attend around you, and appear only to the second sight of lovers.

Pen. O fie! Pray, good sir, you'll leave nothing for your son to say.

O. Book. I did not think I had such a memory. I find the women are now certainly daughters of the women before 'em: Flattery still does it. [*Aside.*]—Tom is my only son, and I extremely desire to have him settled. I own I think him of much merit.

Pen. He would derogate from his birth were he not much a gentleman. But to receive a man in the character of a pretender at first sight——

O. Book. I'll walk him by and by before your window, where your own eyes shall judge. I think there's nothing above his pretences but yourself; but when one of so many excellent qualities bestows herself, it must be condescension. You shall not answer—Farewell, daughter; we are but too apt to believe what we wish.

[*Exit* OLD BOOK.

Pen. 'Tis as you said, Lettice, Old Bookwit came to propose his son.

Lett. I overheard the old gentleman talk of it last night. But, madam, you han't heard the song that was made on you. Oh! 'tis mighty pretty! The gentleman is dying for you, he says it. Pure, pure verses.

Pen. Whoever writ 'em, he's not the first poet I have made. They may talk, and say nature makes a poet, but I say love makes a poet. Don't you see elder brothers, who are by nature born above wit, shall fall in love, and write verses: nay, and pretty good ones, considering they can tag 'em to settlements. But let's see.

[*Reading.*] "To CELIA'S SPINET.

"Thou soft machine that dost her hand obey,
Tell her my grief in thy harmonious lay."

Poor man!

"To shun my moan to thee she'll fly;
To her touch be sure reply,
And, if she removes it, die."

The device is just and truly poetical.

"Know thy bliss—"

Ay, ay, there I come in.

"Know thy bliss, with rapture shake,
Tremble o'er all thy numerous make;
Speak in melting sounds my tears,
Speak my joys, my hopes, my fears—"

Which all depend upon me.

"Thus force her, when from me she'd fly,
By her own hand, like me, to die."

Well, certainly nothing touches the heart of woman so much as poetry. I suppose the master is in the next room. 'Tis his hour; desire him to walk in. 'Twill make one's ears tingle, a song on one's self!

[*Here the song is performed to a spinet.*

Well, dost think, Lettice, my grave lover writ this fine thing—say'st thou?

Lett. No, madam, nobody writes songs on those they are sure of.

Pen. Sure of me! the insolent!

Lett. Nay, I know no more but that he said he'd turn me away as soon as he had married you.

Pen. 'Tis like enough; that's the common practice of your jealous-headed fellows. Well, I have a good mind to dress myself anew, put on my best looks, and send for him to dismiss him. I know he loves me.

Lett. I never knew him show it but by his jealousy.

Pen. As you say, a jealous fellow love! 'tis all mistake —'tis only for himself he has desires; nor cares what the object of his wishes suffers so he himself has satisfaction. —No, he has a gluttony, an hunger for me.

Lett. An hunger for you! I protest, madam, if you'd let me be his cook, and make you ready, I'd poison him. But I'm glad Simon disobeyed you, and told the gentleman's servant who you were, and your lodging.

Pen. Did the rogue do so? Call him hither.

Lett. Simon, why Simon!

Enter SIMON.

Pen. Sirrah, I find I must at last turn you off, you saucy fellow. Don't stand staring and dodging with your feet, and wearing out your livery hat with squeezing for an excuse, but answer me, and that presently.

Sim. I will, madam, as soon as you ask me a question.

Pen. Not afore then—Mr. Pert, don't you know, you told the gentleman's footman in the park who I was, against my constant order, when I walk early. Come, sirrah, tell all that passed between you.

Sim. Why, madam, the gentleman's gentleman came up to me very civilly, and said his master was in discourse with my lady, he supposed; then he fell into talk about

vails [1]—about profits in a service; at last, after a deal of civil discourse between us——

Pen. Come, without this preamble, what he asked you, impertinence; tell that, do.

Sim. He asked about you, and Madam Victoria. I said the handsomest of the two is my lady.

Pen. Speak on boldly, Simon; I'm never angry at a servant that speaks truth.

Sim. He told me he should be very proud of my acquaintance. Indeed, madam, the man was very well spoken, and showed a great deal of respect for me, on your ladyship's account. He is a mighty well spoken man, and said he found I was a smart gentleman; said he'd come again.

Pen. Go, you have done your business. Go down.

[*Exit.*

Lett. Well, after all, madam, I did not think that gentleman displeased you.

Pen.[2] Had but young Bookwit his mien and conversation, how easily would he exclude Lovemore!

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Lovemore is coming up, madam.

Pen. He has not heard, sure, of this new proposal!

Lett. 'Tis possible he may, and come to rant or upbraid your ladyship. I wonder you endure him on these occasions.

Pen. I'll rack his very heart-strings. He shall know all that man e'er suffered for his native mistress, woman.

Lett. His father, madam, has been so long coming out of Suffolk—There are strange tricks in the world, but 'tis not my place to speak.

Pen. However, his father, may come at last. I will

[1] Presents to servants.

[2] *Clarice.* Ah! bon Dieu! si Dorante avait autant d'appas,
Que d'Alcippe aisément il obtiendrait la place!
(*Le Menteur*, II. ii.)

not wholly lose him; as bad as he is, he's better than no husband at all. Stay in the room; I'll talk to you as if he were not present.

Enter LOVEMORE.

Love.[1] Ah! Penelope! inconstant, fickle Penelope!

Pen. But, Lettice, you don't tell me what the gentleman said. Now there's nobody here, you may speak.

Love. Now there's nobody here? Then I am a thing, a utensil! I am nobody, I have no essence that I am sensible of! I think 'twill be so soon!—This ingrate—this perjured!

Pen. Tell me, I say, how the match happened to break off?

Love. This is downright abuse! What! don't you see me, madam?

Lett. He had the folly, upon her being commonly civil to him, to talk of directing her affairs before his time. In the first place, he thought it but necessary her maid, her faithful servant, Mrs. Betty, should be removed.

Love. Her faithful servant, Mrs. Betty? Her betrayer, her whisperer, Mrs. Lettice! Madam, would you but hear me? I will be heard!

Pen. Prithee step, Lettice, and see what noise is that without.

Love. The noise is here, madam; 'tis I that make what you call noise. 'Tis I that claim aloud my right and speak to all the world the wrongs I suffer.

Pen. Cooling herbs, well steeped—a good anodyne at night, made of the juice of hellebore, with very thin diet, may be of use in these cases.

[*Both looking at him as disturbed.*

Love. Cases! what cases? I shall downright run mad with this damned usage! Am I a jest?

[1] *Alcippe.* Ah, Clarice! ah, Clarice! inconstante, volage! (*Le Menteur*, II. iii.)

The idea of the servant remaining in the room is Steele's.

Lett. A jest? No, faith, this is far from a merry madness. Ha! ha! ha!

Love. Harkee, Lettice, I'll downright box you. Hold your tongue, gipsy.

Lett. Dear madam, save me! Go you to him.

Pen. Let him take you.—Bless me, how he stares! Take her.

Lett. Take her.
Pen. Take her. } [*Running round each other.*

Love. Very fine!—No, madam, your gallant, your spark last night; your fine dancer, entertainer, shall take you. He that was your swain; and you, I warrant, a fantastic nymph of the flood or forest. Ha! ha! ha! To be out all night with a young fellow! Oh! that makes you change your countenance, does it so? Fine lady—you wonder how I came to know. Why, choose a discreeter the next time—he told me all himself. Swoon—die for shame at hearing of these words—do!

Pen. I am, indeed, downright ashamed for him that speaks 'em. Whence this insolence, if not from utter distraction, under this roof?

Love. Oh, the ingrate! Have not I, madam, two long years, two ages, with humblest resignation, depended on your smile? and shall I suffer one of yesterday's to treat you, to dance all night with you?

Pen.[1] Speak softly; my father's coming down.

Love. Thy father's coming down! Faithless! Thou hast no father—But to cross me by night upon the water!

Pen. Well, by night upon the water; what then?

Love. Yes, all night.

Pen. What of that?

Love. Without blushing when you hear of 't!

Pen. Blush for what? What do you drive at?

[1] Most of this scene, down to Lovemore's exit, is adapted from *Le Menteur*, II. iii., iv.

Love. Can you, then, coolly ask what 'tis I mean, thou reveller, thou rambler? A fine young lady, with your midnight frolics! But what do I pretend to? I know not how with bended knees to call you Ceres; make you an offering of summer fruits, and deify your vanity! Thou art no goddess; thou'rt a very woman, with all the guile! Your barges! your treats! your fireworks!

Pen. What means the insolent? You grow insufferable!

Love. Oh, Penelope! that look, that disdainful look has pierced my soul, and ebbed my rage to penitence and sorrow. I own my fault; I'm too rash—

Pen. The imaginary enemies you raise are but mere forms of your sickly brain: so I think, and scorn 'em. A diffident, a humorous, and ungenerous man, who, without grounds, calls me inconstant, shall surely find me so. She will be very happy that takes a constant man with twenty thousand humours.

Love. Is it a fault my life's bound up in thee,
That all my powers change with thy looks,
That my eyes gloat on thee when thou'rt present,
And ache and roll for light when thou'rt absent?

Pen. A little ill-usage, I see, improves a lover. I never heard him speak so well in my life before. [*Aside.*

Love. Of you I am not jealous:
'Tis my own indesert[1] that gives me fears,
And tenderness forms dangers where they're not;
I doubt and envy all things that approach thee:
Not a fond mother of a long-wished-for only child beholds with such kind terrors her infant offspring, as I do her I love. She thinks its food, if she's not by, unwholesome; and all the ambient air made up of fevers and of quartan agues, except she shrouds it in her arms. Such is my unpitied, anxious care for you; and can I see another——

Pen. What other?

[1] Want of merit. See the *Tatler*, No. 69.

Love. Nay, if you make a secret of your meeting, there's all that I suspect in it. Another? Young Bookwit is another—

Pen. I never saw his face. Young Bookwit?

Love. What! not though he solicited a glance, with symphonies of charming note, with sumptuous dishes? Not when the flying meteors from the earth made a new day? Not see him? Oh, that was hard; that was unkind! Not one look for all this gallantry?—But love is blind. You can be all night with the son, all day with the father, and never see either. His father was here this morning.—Seek not to excuse: I find your arts, and see their aim too. Go, go, take your Bookwit; forget your lover, as he now must you. [*Going.*

Pen. Hear but three words.

Love. What shall they be?

Pen. Prithee hear me.

Love. No, no, your father's coming down.

Pen. He's not coming, nor can he overhear us. There's time and privacy enough to disabuse you.

Love. I'll hear nothing unless you will be married; unless you give me, as a present earnest of yourself, three kisses, and your word for ever.

Pen. To give way to my satisfaction, then, and be friends again, you would, Mr. Lovemore, have three kisses——

Love. Three kisses, your faith and hand.

Pen. Nothing else? Will you be so contented?

Love. I'll expect higher terms if you accept not these—Quickly, then.

Pen. Well, then—no, my father's coming. Ha! ha! ha!

Love. Laugh at my sufferings! slight my anger!
Is this your base requital of my love?—
Revenge, revenge! I'll print on thy favourite in his heart's blood my revenge. Our swords—our swords

shall dispute our pretences, rather than he enjoy what my long services entitle me to, which is to do myself right for what he intends an injury; though perhaps what we shall dispute for is better lost.

Pen. Mr. Lovemore, you have taken very great liberties. You say I have injured you in my regard to another. Is your opinion, then, of what you say you will dispute for, such as you just now said—better lost?

Love. Look you, madam—so—therefore—as to that—this is such—for that it—You don't consider what you said to me.

Pen. Ha! ha! ha!

Love. You shall by all that's—you shall repent this.

[*Flings out.*

Pen. This is all we have for 't, a little dominion beforehand. These are the creatures that are born to rule us; who creep, who flatter, and servilely beseech our favour; which obtained, they grow sullen, proud, and insolent; pry into the gift, the manner of bestowing, with all the little arts the ungrateful use to hide, or kill their sense and conscience of a benefit.

Lett. Ay, ay, madam, 'tis so. I had a sweetheart once, a lady's butler, to whom I gave a lock of my hair, and the villain, when we quarrelled, told me half of them were grey.

Pen. Ha! ha! ha! the ingrate—the faithless, as Lovemore says.

Lett. And yet, madam, the rogue stole a letter out of a book to ask me for it, as my next suitor found out.

Pen. However, I am sure 'tis in my fate to be subject to one of them very suddenly.

Lett. Ah! madam! the gentleman this morning——

Pen. The fellow's very well, and I am mightily mistaken if my cousin Victoria did not think so.

Lett. And so do you heartily. [*Aside.*

Pen. Yet I wish I had seen this young Bookwit before Lovemore came to-day.

Lett.[1] I'll tell you how, madam. Victoria has ne'er a lover, and is your entire friend. Now, madam, suppose you got her to write a letter to this young gentleman in her own name. You meet him under that name incognito; then, if an accident should happen, both you and she will be safe, and puzzle the truth: you never writ to him, she never met him.

Pen. A lucky thought—step to her immediately. I'll come to her, or she to me.

Lett. I fly, I fly. [*Exit.*

Pen. This is, indeed, a lucky hint of the wench, in which I have another drift, too. Now shall I sift my friend Victoria, and perfectly understand whether she likes that agreeable young fellow; for if her reserved humour easily falls in with this design on Bookwit, she's certainly smitten with the other, and suspects me to be so too—What is this dear, this sudden intruder, love, that Victoria's long and faithful friendship, Lovemore's anxious and constant passion, both vanish before it in a moment? Why are our hearts so accessible at our eyes? —My dear——

Enter VICTORIA *and* LETTICE.

Vict. Dear Pen, I ran to you. Well, what is it?

Pen. Set chairs, and the bohea tea, and leave us. [*Exit* LETT.] Dear Victoria, you have always been my most intimate bosom friend; your wary carriage and circumspection have often been a safety against errors to me—I must confess it. [*Filling her tea.*

Vict. But, my dear, why this preface to me? To the matter—

Pen. You know all that has passed between me and Mr. Lovemore.

[1] There is a similar speech in *Le Menteur*, II. ii.

Vict. I have always approved him, and do now more than ever; for 'tis not a mien and air that makes that worthy creature, a kind husband; but——

Pen. True, but here was old Bookwit this morning, with my father's authority to talk to me of the subject of love.

Vict. Nay, madam, if so, and you can resolve to obey your father—I contend not for Lovemore; for though the young men of this age are so very vicious, so expensive, both of their health and fortune——

Pen. How zealous she is to put me out of her way! False creature! [*Aside.*]—But, my dear friend, you don't take me; your friendship outruns my explanation. 'Twas for his son at Oxford he came to me: He is to walk with him before the door that I may view him, by-and-by.

Vict. Nay, as one must obey their parents wholly, I think a raw young man that never saw the town is better than an old one that has run through all its vices. I congratulate your good fortune. There's a great estate; and he knows nothing—just come to town. The furniture and the horse-cloths will be all your own device for the wedding, and the horses when and where you please. He knows no better.

Pen. But one shall be so long teaching a raw creature a manner.

Vict. Never let him have one; 'twill make him like himself, and think of making advances elsewhere: You'd better have him a booby.—How could I think of the old fellow for you! Look you, Pen, old age has its infirmities, and 'tis a sad prospect for an honest young woman to be sure of being a nurse, and never of being a mother.

Pen. Oh, that I had but your prudence! But, my dear, I have a request to make to you, and that is that you would write him an assignation this evening in the

Park. I'll obey the appointment, and converse with him under that disguise; for the old people will clap up a match before I know anything of the real man. And if one don't know one's husband, how can one manage him —that is to say, obey him?

Vict. Oh! pray, my dear, do you think I don't understand you? Oh! and there's another thing—a scholar makes the best husband in the world.

Pen. Because they are the most knowing?

Vict. No, because they are the least knowing.—But I'll go immediately and obey your commands. I wish you heartily well, my dear, in this matter. [*Kissing her.*

Pen. I thank you, dearest; I don't doubt it indeed.

Vict. Where are you going now, my dear? O fie! this is not like a friend—Do I use you so, dear madam?

Pen. Nay, indeed, madam, I must wait on you.

Vict. Indeed you shan't—indeed you shan't.

[PEN. *follows* VICT.

Pen. Well, madam, will you promise, then, to be as free with me?—Thus does she hope to work me out of my lover, by being made my confident—but that baseness has been too fashionable to pass any more. I have not trusted her, the cunning creature. I begin to hate her so —I'll never be a minute from her. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Covent Garden.*

Enter OLD BOOKWIT, YOUNG BOOKWIT, *and* LATINE.

O. Book. Well, Tom, where have you sauntered about since I saw you? Is not the town mightily increased since you were in it?

Y. Book. Ay, indeed, I need not have been so impatient to have left Oxford. Had I stayed a year longer, they had builded to me.

O. Book. But I don't observe you affected much with the alterations. Where have you been?

Y. Book. No, faith, the New Exchange [1] has taken up all my curiosity.

O. Book. Oh! but, son, you must not go to places to stare at women! Did you buy anything?

Y. Book. Some baubles. But my choice was so distracted among the pretty merchants and their dealers, I knew not where to run first. One little, lisping rogue—"Ribbandths, gloveths, tippeths"—"Sir," cries another, "will you buy a fine sword-knot?" Then a third pretty voice and curtsey—"Does not your lady want hoods, scarfs, fine green silk stockings?" [2] I went by as if I had been in a seraglio, a living gallery of beauties, staring from side to side—I bowing, they laughing—so made my

[1] The New Exchange was on the south side of the Strand, partly on the site of the present Adelphi. It was a very favourite place of resort in Charles II.'s time, and the restoration plays are full of allusions to it. There were four walks, two above and two below stairs. Steele refers to the New Exchange again in the *Spectator*, Nos. 96, 155. It was pulled down in 1737. With the scene here described we may compare Etherege's *She would if she could*, iii. i.:—

"*Mrs. Trinckit.* What d'ye buy? what d'ye lack, gentlemen? Gloves, ribbons, and essences; ribbons, gloves, and essences? . . .

"*Courtall.* Walk a turn or two above, or fool awhile with pretty Mistress Anvil, and scent your eye-brows and periwig with a little essence of oranges, or jessamine."

Similarly in Otway's *Atheist: or the Second Part of the Soldier's Fortune*, ii. i., Courtine remarks:—

"Methinks, this place looks as if it were made for lovings. The lights on each hand of the walk look stately; and then the rustling of silk petticoats, the din and the clatter of the pretty little parti-coloured parrots, that hop and flutter from one side to t'other, puts every sense upon its proper office, and sets the wheels of nature finely moving."

[2] Green silk stockings seem to have been introduced by Elizabeth, Countess of Chesterfield. On this matter the curious may consult Grammont (*Memoirs*, 1846, pp. 177-8, 180).

escape, and brought your son and heir safe to you, through all these darts and glances, to which indeed my breast is not impregnable. But I wonder whence I had this amorous inclination?

O. Book. Whoever you had it from, sirrah, 'tis your business to correct it, by fixing it upon a proper object—But, Tom, you know I am always glad to hear you talk with the gaiety before me that you do elsewhere. But I have now something of consequence (that sudden, serious look was so like me). [*Aside.*]—What I am going to say now, I tell you is extraordinary.

Y. Book. I could not indeed help some seeming extravagancies I have been forced to. But——

O. Book. I do not grudge you your expenses, I was not going to speak on it. For I decay, and so do my desires, while yours grow still upon you. Therefore, what may be spared from mine, I heartily give you to supply yours; 'tis but the just order of things. I scorn to hoard what I only now can gaze at, while your youth and person want those entertainments you may become and taste. All your just pleasures are mine also; in you my youth and gayer years methinks I feel repeated.

Y. Book. Then what can give you, sir, uneasiness?

O. Book. Your affectation of a soldier's dress; makes me think you bent upon a dangerous though noble course; that you'll expose a life, that's dearer to your father than yourself, to daily hazards. I, therefore, have resolved to settle thee,[1] and chosen a young lady, witty, prudent, rich, and fair——

Y. Book. Oh, Victoria! [*Aside.*]—You cannot move too slowly in such a business.

O. Book. Nay, 'tis no sudden thing. Her father and I have been old acquaintance, and I was so confident of

[1] The ensuing dialogue between father and son is adapted from one in *Le Menteur*, ii. v. The story is also followed closely by Foote, in the *Liar*, ii. iii.

her worth, and your compliance, that I can't with honour disengage myself.

Y. Book. How, sir! when honour calls me to the field, where I may perpetuate your name by some brave exploit——

O. Book. You may do it much better, Tom, at home, by a brave boy. Come, come, it must be so——

Y. Book. What shall I do for some invention? [*Aside.*

O. Book. Let it be so, dear Tom; it must be so.

Y. Book. What if it be impossible?

O. Book. Impossible! as how?

Y. Book. Upon my knees I beg your pardon, sir; I am——

O. Book. What?

Y. Book. At Oxford——

O. Book. What art thou at Oxford? Rise and tell me.

Y. Book. Why I am married there, since you needs must know.

O. Book. Married, without my consent!

Y. Book. There was a force upon me; you'll easily get all annulled if you desire it. It was the crossest, most unhappy accident. Yet, indeed, she is an excellent creature!

Lat. How could he conceal this all this while from me? But I remember he used to be out of the college whole nights, we knew not where: [*Aside.*

PENELOPE *and* VICTORIA *at the window.*

Pen. [*Aside.*] The very man we met this morning; and I employ my rival to write to him! How confidently she stares at the fellow, and observes his action!

Vict. Betty, do you see with what intent and with what fire in her eyes Penelope gazes yonder? But take you

that letter and give it when the old gentleman's gone. Goodness! how concerned she seems! Well, some women!—— [*Exeunt Ladies from above.*

O. Book. Let that pass, since the business is irrevocable. What is her name?

Y. Book. Matilda, and her father's, Newtown.

O. Book. They're names I never heard before; but go on.

Y. Book. This lady, sir, I saw in a public assembly; at the first sight she made me hers for ever. From that instant I languished, nor had vital heat out of her presence. The sun to me shed influence in vain; he rose and set both unobserved, nor was to any living this human life so much a dream as me. All this she observed, but not untouched observed. She shewed a noble gratitude to a noble passion; favours I soon received, but severely modest ones.

Lat. Oh! that's pre-supposed; you, to be sure, would ne'er desire any other. [*Aside.*

Y. Book. We had contrived to meet o'nights,
The sweetest hours of love; and there was I
One evening in her lodging—'Twas, as I remember,
Yes, 'twas on the second of December;
That's the very night I was caught——

Lat. 'Tis strange, a fellow of his wit to be trepanned into a marriage—— [*Aside.*

Y. Book. Her father supped abroad that night, which made us think ourselves secure. But coming home by accident sooner than we expected, we heard him at the door. How did that noise surprise us! She hid me behind the bed, then lets him in.

O. Book. I tremble for the poor young lady.—Pray go on. How did she recover herself?

Y. Book. She fell into the prettiest artful little tales to divert him and hide her discomposure—which he interrupted by telling her she must be married suddenly to

one proposed to him that evening. This was to me daggers.

O. Book. But she !——

Y. Book. She, by general answers, in that case managed it so well that he was going down, when instantly my watch in my pocket struck ten. He turns him short on his amazed daughter, asked where she had it. She cried her cousin Martha sent it out of the country to be mended for her. He said he would take care on't. She comes to me, but as I was giving it her the string was so entangled in the cock of a pistol I always had about me on those occasions, that my haste to disengage it fired it off. My mistress swoons away. The father ran out, crying out murder. I thought her dead, feared his return, which he soon did with two boisterous rogues, his sons, and his whole family of servants. I would have made my escape, but they opposed me with drawn swords. I wounded both ; but a lusty wench, with a fireshovel, at one blow struck down my sword, and broke it all to pieces.

O. Book. But still, the poor young lady !——

Y. Book. Here was I seized. Meantime, Matilda wakes from her trance, beholding me held like a ruffian, both her brothers bleeding. She was returning to it. What should I do? I saw the hoary father in the divided sorrow, for his sons' lives and daughter's honour, of both which he thought me the invader. She, with pitying, dying and reproaching looks, beseeched me, and taught me what I owed her constant love. I yielded, sir, I own I yielded to the just terror of their family resentment, and to my mistress's more dreadful upbraiding. Thus am I, sir, the martyr of an honest passion——

O. Book. That I most blame is, that you concealed it from your best friend. I'll instantly to Penelope's father, and make my apology. He is my friend.

[*Exit.*

Lat. This marriage strangely surprised me.

Y. Book. Why, did you believe it, too, as well as the old gentleman? Why, then, I did it excellently. Ha! ha! ha!

Lat. What,[1] the watch! The pistol! Lady swooning! Her pitying, upbraiding look! All chimera?

Y. Book. Nothing but downright wit, to keep myself safe for Victoria.

Lat. May I desire one favour?

Y. Book. What can I deny thee, my privado?

Lat. Only that you'd give me some little secret hint when next you l——are going to be witty. But to jumble particulars so readily! 'Tis impossible you could, I believe, at the beginning of your tale know the ending —Yet——

Y. Book. These are gifts, child, mere gifts; 'tis not to be learnt—the skill of lying—except humour, wit, invention, presence of mind, retention, memory, circumspection, etc., were to be obtained by industry. You must not hum, nor haw, nor blush for't——

Lat. Who have we got here?

BETTY *entering.*

Bet. May I be so bold as to crave the liberty to ask your name?

Y. Book. My bright handmaid, my little she Ganymede—thou charming Hebe—you may ask me my name, for I won't tell it you—till you do; because I'd have the more words with you.

Bet. Are not you Mr. Bookwit?

Y. Book. The very same, my dear.

Bet. There, then [*Giving him letter.*] He's a mighty pretty man. [*Exit* BETTY.

Y. Book. [*Reading.*] "You may wonder—your pe[illegible]

[1] The next four speeches are from *Le Menteur*, ii. vi

and character—this evening, near Rosamond's Pond, on the other side the Park.—VICTORIA."

Oh, the happiness! What is become of the girl? Oh! Latine! Latine! ask me fifty questions all at once! What ails me? Why this joy? Who is this from? Oh, I could die, methinks, this moment, lest there should be in fate some future ill to dash my present joy! Why, Jack, why dost not ask me what's the matter?

Lat. If you'd but give me leave——

Y. Book. No; do not speak. Let me talk all; I fain would celebrate my fair one's praise, her every beauty! but the mind's too full to utter anything that is articulate, and will give way to nothing but mere names and interjections. O Victoria! Victoria! Victoria! O my Victoria! Read there.

Lat. Well, I own this subscribed "Victoria"—but still I am afraid of mistakes.

Y. Book. No—kneel down and ask forgiveness. You don't believe that she that would not speak to me would write.—But after all raptures and ecstasies—prithee step after the maid, learn what you can of her fortune, and so forth. Get interest to be admitted another time.

[*Exit* LATINE.

Enter FREDERICK.

Fred. Sir, your servant.

Y. Book. Yours, sir; have you business with me?

Fred. This paper speaks it.

Y. Book. [*Reading.*] "Of a friend you've made me your mortal enemy. With your sword I expect satisfaction tomorrow morning at six in Hyde Park.—LOVEMORE."

Do you know the contents of this letter?

Fred. Yes, sir, it is a challenge from Lovemore.

Y. Book. Are you to be his second?

Fred. I offered it, but he will meet you single.

Y. Book. The fewer the better cheer.

Fred. You're very pleasant, sir.

Y. Book. My good humour was ever challenge-proof. I will be very punctual. [*Exit* FRED.]—I fall into business very fast. There, thou dear letter of love; be there, thou of hatred. There; men of business must sort their papers.—I fear he saw me put up two letters.

Enter LATINE.

Oh, Jack, more adventures, another lady has writ.

Lat. Let's see it.

Y. Book. No; always tender of rep.—she is of quality—a gentleman usher came with it. I can't believe there's anything in that old whim of being wrapt in one's mother's smock to be thus lucky; I suppose I was used like other children. They clapped me on a skull-cap, swathed me hard, played me in arms, and shewed me London. But however it comes about I have strange luck with the women.

Lat. But let us see this letter.

Y. Book. [*Reading.*] "No, no—A woman of condition to go so far—But, indeed, your passion, your wit—My page—at the back stairs—secrecy, and your veracity——

Lat. There her ladyship nicked it. Pox, I'll be as humourous and frolic as you. You pert fellows are the only successful——

Y. Book. Well said, lad; and, as Mr. Bayes says,[1] now the plot thickens upon us we'll spend our time as gaily as the best of 'em, and all of it in love—

For since through all the race of man we find,
Each to some darling passion is inclined,
Let love be still the bias of my mind. [*Exeunt.*

[1] In the Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal* (1671), iii. ii.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—VICTORIA'S *Lodgings, Covent Garden.*

Enter VICTORIA *and* BETTY.

VICT. This was, indeed, Betty, a very diverting accident, that I should be employed to write to her lover. Now, I can't but think how angry my cousin Pen is. She frets, I warrant, at her very looking-glass, which used to be her comforter upon all occasions. Ha! ha! ha!

Bet. I would not be in poor Mrs. Lettice's place for all the world. Nothing, to be sure, can please to-day; did you mind how she nestled and fumed inwardly to see your ladyship look so well? Nay, indeed, madam, you were in high beauty.

Vict. Yet I must confess I was myself a little discomposed. I was ashamed for my friend, and then to see her show such a regard for a fellow!

Bet. But I swear, were I to have my will, you should be always angry at me. It gives your ladyship such a pretty fierceness, and quick spirit to your features—not that you want it—yet it adds——

Vict. There are some people very unhappily pretend to fire and life; there's poor, stupid, insipid Lady Fad,

has heard of the word spleen, and distaste, and sets up for being out of humour, with that unmeaning face of hers.

Bet. You're in a fine humour, madam.

Vict. Her ladyship's physician prescribed anger to her; upon which she comes in public with her eyes staringly open. This she designs for vivacity, and gapes about like a wandering country lady. She pretends to be a remarker, and looks at everybody; but, alas, she wants it here, and knows not that to see, is no more to look, than to go is to walk. For you must know, Betty, every child can see, but 'tis an observing creature that can look; as every pretty girl can go, but 'tis a fine woman that walks.

Both. Ha! ha! ha!

Vict. But, by the way, there's Mrs. Penelope, methinks, does neither; I have a kindness for her, but she has no gesture in the least. My dear——

Enter PENELOPE.

Pen. Well, my dear ——

Bet. How civilly people of quality hate one another. [*Aside.*

Pen. Well, my dear, were not you strangely surprised to see that this young Bookwit should be the soldier we met this morning?

Vict. The confident lying creature! Indeed, I wondered you'd suffer him to entertain you so long.

Pen. You must know, madam, he's married too at Oxford.

Vict. The ugly wretch! I think him downright disagreeable.—But perhaps this is a fetch of hers; he had no married look. [*Aside.*

Pen. Yet I am resolved to go to your assignation, if it be but to confront the coxcomb, and laugh at his lie.

Such fellows should be made to know themselves, and that they're understood.

Vict. I'll wait upon you, my dear.—She's very prettily dressed. [*Aside.*]—But indeed, my dear, you shan't go with your hood so; it makes you look abominably, with your head so forward. There—[*Displacing her head*]; that's something. You had a fearful, silly blushing look; now you command all hearts.

Pen. Thank you, my dear.

Vict. Your servant, dearest.

Pen. But alas, madam, who patched you to-day? Let me see. It is the hardest thing in dress—I may say, without vanity, I know a little of it. That so low on the cheek pulps the flesh too much. Hold still, my dear, I'll place it just by your eye.—Now she downright squints. [*Aside.*

Vict. There's nothing like a sincere friend, for one is not a judge of one's self. I have a patch-box about me. Hold, my dear, that gives you a sedate air, that large one near your temples.

Pen. People, perhaps, don't mind these things. But if it be true, as the poet finely sings, that "all the passions in the features are," we may show or hide 'em, as we know how to affix these pretty artificial moles——

Vict. And so catch lovers, and puzzle physiognomy.

Pen. 'Tis true; then pray, my dear, let me put a little disdain in your face: for we'll plague this fop. There—that on your forehead does it.

Vict. Hold, my dear; I'll give indifference for him, a patch just at the point of your lip exactly shows it—and that you're dumb to all applications.

Pen. You wish I would be. [*Aside.*

Vict. There, my dear.

Pen. But, dear madam, your hair is not half powdered. Betty, bring the powder-box to your lady. It gives one

a clean look (though your complexion does not want it) to enliven it.

Vict. Oh! fie, this from you! But I know you won't flatter me, you're too much my friend.

Pen. Now, madam, you shall see. [*Powders her.*]—Now she looks like a sprite. [*Aside.*

Vict. Thank you, my dear; we'll take an hack. Our maids shall go with us. Come, dear friend.

[*Exeunt arm in arm.*

Bet. Pray, Madam Lettice, be pleased to go on.

Lett. Indeed, Madam Betty, I must beg your pardon.

Bet. I am at home, dear Madam Lettice.

Lett. Well, madam, this is unkind. I don't use you with this ceremony. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Covent Garden.*

Enter YOUNG BOOKWIT *and* LATINE *after a flourish.*

Y. Book. Victoria! Victoria! Victoria!

Lat. Make way, make way. By your leave. Stand by. Victoria! "*Formosam resonare doces Amaryllida sylvas.*"[1]

Y. Book. Well said, Jack. Let me see any of your sparks besides myself keep such an equipage. I don't question but in a little time I shall be a finer fop than the town has yet seen. All my lackeys shall be linguists as thou art. While thus I ride immortal steeds—how my horses stare at me! They see I am a very new sort of beau.

Lat. This is rare—the having this noise of music. But won't it be reckoned a disturbance?

Y. Book. No, no; it is a usual gallantry here. But

[1] You teach the woods to re-echo the name of the fair Amaryllis (*Virgil, Buc.* I. v).

the vocal is an elegance hardly known before me here—who am the founder of accomplished fools, of which I'll institute an order. All coxcombs of learning and parts shall after me be called Bookwits—a sect will soon be more numerous, and in more credit, than your Aristotelians, Platonists, and Academics.

Lat. Sir, 'twill be extraordinary, and you are really a wise person—you put your theory of philosophy into practice; 'tis not with you a dead letter.

Y. Book. Oh! sir, no. The design of learning is for the use of life; therefore I'll settle a family very suddenly, and show my literature in economy.

Lat. As how, pray?

Y. Book. I'll have four peripatetic footmen, two followers of Aristippus for valets de chambre, and an epicurean cook—with an hermetical chemist (who are good only at making fires) for my scullion; and then I think all is disposed. But, methinks this fair one takes state upon her. But I am none of your languishers; I am not known in town, and if I misbehave, 'tis but being sent back again to my small beer and three-halfpenny commons; and I, like many another beau, only blazed and vanished——

Lat. But you know I love music immoderately. How do you dispose your entertainment? Let 'em begin.

Y. Book. Well, give me but leave. The fiddles will certainly attract the ladies, I mean the nymphs who have grottos round this enchanted forest. In the first place, you intelligences that move this vehicle—how the fellows stare!

Chair. Good your honour, speak to us in English.

Y. Book. Why then, you chairmen, wherever I move, you are to follow me; for I mean to strut, shine through the dusk of the evening, and look as like a lazy town-fool as I can, to charm 'em.

Lat. Well, but the music?

Y. Book. But remember, ye sons of Phœbus, brethren of the string and lyre, that is to say, ye fiddlers—Let me have a flourish as I now direct. When I lift up my cane, let it be martial. If I but throw myself just forward on it, or but raise it smoothly, sigh all for love, to show, as I think fit, that I would die or fight for her you see me bow to. Well, then, strike up :—

Song, by MR. LEVERIDGE.[1]

I.

Venus has left her Grecian isles,
With all her gaudy train
Of little loves, soft cares and smiles,
In my larger breast to reign.

II.

Ye tender herds and list'ning deer,
Forget your food, forget your fear,
The bright Victoria will be here.

III.

The savages about me throng,
Moved with the passion of my song,
And think Victoria stays too long.

Y. Book. There's for you, Jack ; is not that like a fine gentleman that writes for his own diversion ?

Lat. And nobody's else.

Y. Book. Now I warrant one of your common sparks would have stamped, fretted, and cried, what the devil ! fooled ! jilted ! abused !—while I, in metre, to show you how well nothing at all may be made to run—

The savages about me throng,
Moved with the passion of my song,
And think Victoria stays too long.

[1] Richard Leveridge had a deep and powerful bass voice, and he also composed much song music. He died in 1758, aged 88.

Lat. I begin to be one of those savages.

Enter VICTORIA, PENELOPE, LETTICE, *and* BETTY.

Vict. We had better have stayed where we were, and listened to that charming echo, than have come in search of that liar.

Lat. Do you see yonder?

Y. Book. [*Gives the sign and sings himself.*] Thus, madam, have I spent my time almost ever since I saw you, repeated your name to the woods, the dales, and echoing groves.

Pen. Prithee observe him. Now he begins.

Y. Book. I had not time to carve your name on every tree, but that's a melancholy employment, not for those lovers that are favoured with assignation.

Vict. Prithee, cousin, do you talk to him in my name. I'll be silent till I see farther.[1]

Pen. The spring is now so forward, that it must indeed be attributed to your passion that you are not in the field.

Y. Book. You do me justice, madam, in that thought, for I am strangely pestered to be there. Well, the French are the most industrious people in the world. I had a letter from one of their generals, that shall be nameless (it came over by the way of Holland), with an offer of very great terms, if I would but barely send my opinion in the use of pikes, about which he tells me their Prince and generals have lately held a grand court martial.

Both. Ha! ha! ha!

Lat. These cunning things keep still together to puzzle us.—I'll alarm him.—Sir, one word——

Vict. Come, come, we'll have no whispering, no messages at present. Some other ladies have sent, but they shan't have you from us.

[1] *Lucrèce.* Mais parle sous mon nom, c'est à moi de me taire. (*Le Menteur*, III. v.)

Both. Ha! ha! ha!

Y. Book. I hold myself obliged to be of the same humour ladies are in—ha! ha! ha! Now pray do me the favour to tell me what I laughed at.

Pen.[1] Why, you must know, your talking of the French and war put us in mind of a young coxcomb that came last night from Oxford, calls himself soldier, treats ladies, fights battles, raises jealousies with downright lies of his own inventing—ha! ha! ha!

Y. Book. That must be an impudent young rascal certainly—ha! ha! ha!

Vict. Nay, this is beyond comparison-——

Y. Book. I can't conceive how one of those sneaking academics could personate such a character; for we, bred in camps, have a behaviour that shows we are used to act before crowds.

Pen. 'Tis certainly so; nay, he has been confronted with it, as plainly as I speak to you, and yet not blushed for it, but carried it as if he knew not the man——

Y. Book. That may be; 'tis want of knowing themselves makes those coxcombs so confident.

Pen. The faithless! shameless! Well, then, to see, if possible, such a one may be brought to that sense, I tell you, this worthy hero two days ago was in hanging-sleeves at Oxford, and is called Mr. Bookwit. Ha! ha!

Y. Book. Well, was it not well enough carried? Pooh, I knew you well enough, and you knew me, before you writ to me for Mr. Bookwit's son. But I fell into that way of talking purely to divert you. I knew you a woman of wit and spirit, and that acting that part would at least show I had fire in me, and wished myself what I would be half an age to serve and please you—suffer in camps all the vicissitudes of burning heats and sharp afflicting colds—

Vict. Look you, sir, I shall tell Mrs. Matilda Newtown,

[1] This speech is adapted from one in *Le Menteur*, III. v.

your spouse at Oxford, what you are saying to another lady.

Pen. Prithee cousin, never give yourself the trouble to meddle in such a work; one hardly knows how to speak it to a gentleman, but don't touch the affairs of so impudent a liar.

Y. Book. Ha! ha! ha!—Why, madam, have they told you of the marriage too? Well, I was hard put to it there. I had like to have been gravelled, faith. You were more beholden to me for that than anything. Had it not been for that, they had married me to Mrs. Penelope, old Getwel's granddaughter, the great fortune; but I refused her for you—who are a greater. [*Aside.*

Lat. Sir! sir! pray sir, one word——

Pen. and Vict. Stand off, sirrah.

Vict. You shan't come near him; none of your dumb signs.

Pen. Then you have refused Penelope, though a great fortune! What could you dislike in her?

Y. Book. The whole woman. Her person, nor carriage please me. She is one of those women of condition, who do and say what they please with an assured air, and think that's enough, only to be called fine mistress such-a-one's manner.

Pen. This is not to be endured.—I do assure you, sir, Mrs. Penelope has refused your betters.

Y. Book. I don't much value my betters in her judgment, but am sorry to see you concerned for her. When I have been at church, where I first saw you, I've seen the gay giddy thing in a gallery watching eyes to make curtsies. She is indeed a very ceremonious churchwoman, and never is guilty of a sin of omission to any lady of quality within eye-shot. In short, I don't like the woman, and would go to Tunis or Aleppo for a wife before I'd take her.

Vict. I cannot bear this of my friend; if you go on,

sir, at this rate, Tunis or Aleppo are the properest places for you to show your gallantry in ; 'twill never be received by any here—I hope she believes me.

[*Aside.*

Pen. The lady's in the right on't ; who can confide in a known common impostor?

Y. Book.[1] Ah, madam! how can you use a man that loves you so unjustly? But call me what you will, liar, cheat, impostor—do but add, your servant, and I am satisfied. I have, indeed, madam, ran through many shifts in hopes to gain you, and could be contented to run through all the shapes in Ovid's Metamorphoses, could I but return to this on my bended knees, of my fair one's humble servant.

Vict. Prithee let us leave him, as you told me ; I wonder you can suffer him to entertain you so long. Leave him, let him kneel to the trees and call to the woods if he will.—Oh, I could brain him—how ugly he looks kneeling to her ! [*Aside.*

Pen. No, I'll stay to plague him more.—But what opinion can I have of this sudden passion? You hardly know me, I believe, or my circumstances?

Y. Book. No, no, not I ; I don't know you. Your mother was not Alderman Sterling's daughter ; your father, Mr. Philips, of Gray's Inn, who had an estate and never practised? You had not a brother killed at Landen? Your sister Diana is not dead? nor you are not co-heiress with Miss Molly? No, madam, I don't know you ; no, nor love you.

Pen. I wish I had taken her advice in going ; he means her all this while [*Aside.*]—Pshaw, this is downright fooling. Let's go, my dear ; leave him to the woods, as you say—I wish 'twas full of bears. [*Aside.*

Vict. No ; now I'll stay to plague him.

[1] The ensuing dialogue, down to the exit of the ladies, follows generally that in *Le Menteur*, III. v.

Pen. No, you shan't stay.—Sir, we have given ourselves the diversion to see you, and confront you in your falsehoods; in which you have entangled yourself to that degree, you know not even the woman you pretend to; and therefore, sir, I so far despise you, that if you should come after me with your fiddles, I'll have a porter—ready to let you in. [*Aside.*

Vict. I don't know how to threaten a gentleman in that manner, but I'm sure I shall never entertain any man that has disobliged my friend, while my name's Victoria! [*Exeunt arm in arm.*

Lat. Master, methinks these ladies don't understand wit. They were very rough with you.

Y. Book. Ay, they were somewhat dull. But really Victoria discovered herself at her going, methinks, agreeably enough.

Lat. I believe they are irrecoverably lost. Pox on't, when I gave you so many signs, too.

Y. Book. Well, hang thinking. Let's to the tavern, and in every glass name a new beauty, till I either forget, or am inspired with some new project to attain her.

While in a lovely bowl I drown my care,
She'll cease to be, or I to think her, fair. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*Covent Garden.*

Enter YOUNG BOOKWIT *and* LATINE.

YOUNG BOOK. This Roebuck has almost done my business. Rigby's an honest fellow, and would not poison us. The wine had good-humour, mirth, and joy in it. My blood beats high and frolic. What says my dear lackey? Ha!

Lat. Why, sir, I say, sir, that I am in so noble, so exalted a condition, that I almost forget I am your honour's footman.

Y. Book. Do but your business well to-night.

Lat. Who says the tongue stutters, legs falter, and eyes fail with drink? 'Tis false, my dear master, my tongue runs faster than ever; my legs so brisk and nimble, that I can't stand still; and my eyes are better than ever they were; for I see everything double—But the letter, the letter, I warrant I give it her.

Y. Book. Here, here, Jack, take it.

Lat. Let's come nearer the lamp. This is the foul copy of it that 'tis wrapped in. Let me judge. Now I'll be sedate. Let me read it again.

Y. Book. But you look cursedly fluttered; they'll

say you're drunk. Let's see, I must comb your wig a little.

Lat. I shall be kicked for this letter here about the middle. You should not talk of joys so soon; you should write miserable a fortnight or three weeks longer —I shall be kicked.

Y. Book. What then? what then? A man of your philosophy must needs remember, the body's but the mere organ of the mind. Kicks come under the topic of things without. What shall I do for powder for this smart bob? [*Combs out his own wig into* LAT'S.

Lat. 'Tis no matter, sir; powder comes under the notion of things without.

Y. Book. Oh! but ladies are no philosophers; but as to being drubbed (these stockings too), you must fix your imagination upon some other object, and you may, by force of thought, suspend your feeling. The body is but the instrument of the mind, and you may command an instrument.

Lat. No, sir, I'll have you to know, I'll save my carcass by mere dint of eloquence. You have no other orders?

Y. Book. No; but may persuasion, grace, and elocution hang on thy lips. But if you can come in to Victoria, she and the wine you've drank will inspire you. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Lat. This is the enchanted castle which the lady fair inhabits. Ha! Mr. Simon, sir, I am your most humble servant. My dear friend——

Enter SIMON.

Sim. Your servant, good sir; my lady is with Madam Victoria at cards. She'll lie here to-night—but all's ruined; they are both huge angry with your master. But Lettice, having taken a fancy to you, Mr. John, spoke up rarely, that she did indeed.

Lat. Can't one come to the speech of her?

Sim. I was ordered to have a strict eye to the door, and let nobody in whatever. I don't care for going up, because she'll see I have made a cap of one of the finest napkins, for which she'll make a plaguy noise.

Lat. Nay, nay, you are exactly of my mind; I love to avoid anger.

Sim. You are a little disguised in drink, though, Mr. John—but I ain't seen you, not I. Go straight up: Mrs. Lettice is in the ante-chamber.

Lat. I thank you, dear friend. My master bids me upon these occasions—— [*Gives him money.*

Sim. I beg your pardon, good Mr. John.

Lat. Look you, I am a servant as well as you; what do you mean, Mr. Simon? Come, come, time's precious. When your lady's married, all these vails will end.

Sim. Nay, I said behind your back, Mr. John, that you were very well spoken. Well, put up briskly. I'll stand your friend as much as one servant can to another, against all masters and mistresses whatever.

Lat. Thanks, good Mr. Simon. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—PENELOPE'S *Lodgings.*

LETTICE, *discovered reading, by a small candle; two large ones by her unlighted.*

Lett. 'Tis a most sad thing, one dare not light a large candle except company's coming in, and I scarce can see to read this piteous story. Well, in all these distresses and misfortunes, the faithful Argalus was renowned all over the plains of Arca—Arca—Arcadia—for his loyal and true affection to his charming paramour, Parthenia.[1]

[1] The story will be found in Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*. The tale of Argalus and Parthenia was put into verse by Francis Quarles.

Blessings on his heart for it; there are no such suitors nowadays. [*Weeping.*] But I hope they'll come together again at the end of the book, and marry, and have several children. Oh! Bless me! A man here! [*Turns over the leaves.*]—The gentleman's pretty man—— [*Aside.*

Enter LATINE.

I wonder by what means, with that impudence, you could offer to come upstairs at this time of the night, and my lady in the next room. I protest I'll cry out.

[*In a low voice all.*

Lat. Dear Mrs. Lettice, my love to you. [*Aloud.*

Lett. Hist, hist! I am, methinks, however, loth to discover you, because servants must do as they're bid; for I know it was not to see me, but some message from your master you came about.

Lat. I offered to bring a letter from him, in hopes to see you, my dearest. I'll not give it at all; I don't care, my dearest. [*Kisses her hand.*

Lett. Pho! pho! now you are rude, because you know one dare not discover you. You do what you will.—How he kisses one's hand: I warrant he has kissed his betters. [*Aside.*]—Pray, did you never live in a lady's service?

Lat. No; nor do I value any of the sex but your dear self, Mrs. Lettice.—I would be discovered. [*Aside.*]—I'm in a rapture! in a flame!

Pen. [*Within.*] Who's there?

Lett. Hist, hist! could not you have forced a kiss quietly?—Madam! madam!—Hold me fast. Show the letter, my lady's coming.—I tell you, sir, she will receive no message at all. Get you downstairs, you impudent! —Hold me faster yet; she loves your master.

[*Softly aside to* LATINE.

Enter PENELOPE *and* VICTORIA.

Pen. What can this mean? What fellow's that has seized the wench?

Lett. Madam, madam, here's Mr. Bookwit's footman drunk, and has directly stole upstairs with some ill design, I fear, on me—but has a letter from his master to your ladyship.

Pen. Call up the servants: Simon, William, Kate, Alf! I'll have the rascal well basted for his insolence—served just as his master deserves.

Lat. [*Kneeling.*] Let not those lips, more sweet than labour of Hyblæan bees, utter a sentence, as if a Libyan lioness on a mountain gave thee suck, and thou wert the obdurate offspring of a rock.

Vict. Hyblæan! Libyan! Obdurate! Ridiculous. The fellow has got his master's cant! Ha! ha! ha!

Pen. I'll put him out of it, I'll warrant you. What, will no one come up there?

Enter Servants *with brooms, &c.*

Lat. Oh! for the force of eloquence to allay and reconcile the passion of this angry mansion!—I had like to have said plain house, which had been against the laws of buskin, in which I would at present talk. [*Aside.*

Pen. Did you ever hear anything like this? Ha! ha!

Maid. Madam, shall I beat him?

Lat. Ah! culinary fair, compose thy rage; thou whose more skilful hand is still employed in offices for the support of nature, descend not from thyself, thou bright cookmaid—— There I sunk again! [*Aside.*]—With heightened gusts and quickening tastes, by you what would be labour else is made delight. Thou great robust, let not thy hand all red assault a life it rather should preserve.

Maid. Good madam, excuse me, I can't touch him—— I have bowels for him. [*Weeping.*

Sim. I wish I had his learning. I'll warrant he buys in everything wherever he lives.

Lat. This, madam, this faithful paper tells you the

passions of the tenderest heart that ever bled for cruel maid. Oh, Victoria! did you but hear his sighs, his restless hours!—how often he repeats Victoria!

Lett. Victoria! Then I find this is none on't meant to my lady—nor to me neither; the master and man are both rogues. [*Aside.*

Pen. Receive your seasonable epistle now at midnight!

Vict. He can't mean me—— To you he all along addressed.—Would I could read it without her. [*Aside.*

Pen. To show you I value neither author nor bearer of it—kick the fellow down!

Lat. Nay, madam, since matters must come to extremities, I'd rather have the honour of your ladyship's command to be cudgelled by your good family than have it from my master. A disappointed lover in his rage will strike stone walls and things inanimate, much more a poor live footman; therefore I must deliver my message. I'll read it to you, ladies, for I see you are friends.

Pen. Away with him.

Lat. "If the sincerity of my intentions were not——"

Lett. Get out, false wretch.

Lat. "Demonstrable, in spite of——"

Maid. Take that——

Lat. "These accidents in which I have been involved, I should not dare to tell you how alternately joys, raptures, ecstasies, miseries, doubts, and anxieties do attack a breast devoted to you."

Whither shall injured virtue fly for shelter,
When love and honour suffer thus in me?
Oh! I could rage, call elements about me, spout cataracts——
Must I be drubbed with broom-staves? [*Exit.* LAT.

Pen. Come in, my dear, again. The night is cold.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Covent Garden.*

Enter LOVEMORE *and* FREDERICK.

Love. It is so pleasant a night that I will see you over the Garden to your lodgings.

Fred. That compliment won't pass upon me. Your reason for sauntering this way is that 'tis near Penelope's.

Love. I come for her sake! No; should she write, beseech, kneel to me, I think I ne'er should value her more. No, I'll be no longer her tool, her jest; she shall not dally with a passion she deserves not.

Fred. 'Twere very well were this resolution in your power; but believe me, friend, one smile, one glance that were but doubtful whether favourable, would conquer all your indignation.

Love. Faith, I'm afraid what you say is true.

Fred. Then strive not to be rationally mad, which you attempt if you think you can at once be at your own command and at another's. Would you be master of yourself and have a mistress?

Love. But I can rebel against that mistress.

Fred. Do if you can. Nay, I'm sure 'tis in your power, because to-morrow morning you are to fight a rival for her—because though you know she lies backwards, and you can't so much as see her chamber window, you must needs walk hither. Well, I protest I'm of your mind; there is, methinks, now a particular amiable gloom about that house—though, perhaps, to ordinary beholders it is exactly like the others.

Love. You are very witty, I must confess, at your friend's follies, Mr. Frederick.

Fred. I won't then any longer disturb your meditation, but e'en go home like a dull rogue as I am, and without love enough to any woman, or hatred enough to any man, to keep me awake, fall fast asleep—I was going to wish you rest, but you are above all that. If it should rain,

I'd advise you not to forget it does, but go into the Piazza. [*Exit.*

Love. 'Tis very well, I'm deservedly laughed at. But the door opens—Bookwit's footman! [LATINE *crosses the stage.*] The master, I suppose, is there too. I'll watch for his coming out—— The morning approaches too slowly. He shall not sleep to-night except it be for ever—— Oh, revenge! Oh, jealousy!

Enter YOUNG BOOKWIT, *with bottle and glass, singing.*[1]

Y. Book. Since the day of poor man,
That little, little span,
Though long it can't last,
For the future and past
Is spent with remorse and despair.

With such a full glass
Let that of life pass,
'Tis made up of trouble,
A storm though a bubble,
There's no bliss but forgetting your care.

I wonder what's become of poor Latine. I wish he had a bumper of this—— [*Drinks.*

Love. I have no patience to observe his insolent jollity; how immoderately joyful my misery has made him!—Bookwit!

Y. Book. Lovemore!

Love. What, sir! are you diverting the thought of to-morrow morning's business with midnight riot? Or is it an assignation keeps you out of bed thus late?

Y. Book. An hour or two till morning is not much in either of our lives; therefore I must tell you now, sir, I am ready for your message.

Love. That conscious light and stars are witnesses of——

[1] Leveridge composed the music for this song.

Y. Book. I want no witnesses. I have a sword, as you bid me meet you. [*They draw and fight.*

Love. You've done my business. [*Falls.*

Y. Book. Then I've done what you desired me. But this is no place for me. [*Exit.*

Enter CONSTABLE *and* WATCHMEN.

Const. Where, where was this clashing of swords? So-ho! So-ho! You, sir, what, are you dead? Speak, friend; what are you afraid of? If you are dead, the law can't take hold of you.

Watch. I beg your pardon, Mr. Constable, he ought by the law to be carried to the Round-house for being dead at this time of night.

Const. Then away with him, you three—— And you, gentlemen, follow me to find out who killed him.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter SIMON.

Sim. What's the matter, good gentlemen, what's the matter? Oh, me! Mr. Lovemore killed! Oh, me! My mind gives me that it must be about our young lady.

Watch. Does it so, sir? Then you must stay with us.

[*Some hold* SIMON, *whilst others carry* LOVEMORE *off.*

Sim. I stay with you! Oh, gemini! Indeed, I can't—— They can't be without me at our house.

Watch. But they must, friend—— Harkee, friend—I hope you'll be hanged. [*Whispers him.*

Sim. I hanged! Pray, sir, take care of your words. Madam Penelope's, our young lady's servant, hanged! Take care what you say.

Enter LATINE.

Lat. Whither can this Bookwit be gone?

Sim. Oh! Mr. John, Mr. Lovemore is killed just now,

since you went out of our house; and you and your master must have an hand in it.

Lat. How? Lovemore killed! [*They seize* LATINE.

Enter others with YOUNG BOOKWIT.

Y. Book. Hands off, you dirty midnight rascals. Let me go, or——

Const. Sir, what were you running so fast for? There's a man killed in the Garden, and you're a fine gentleman, and it must be you—for good honest people only beat one another——

Lat. Nay, nay, we are all in a fair way to be fine gentlemen, Mr. Simon and all.

Const. Hands off, rascals, you said just now—do you know what a constable is?

Y. Book. The greatest man in the parish when all the rest are asleep.

Const. Come, come, I find they are desperate fellows; we'll to the justice, and commit 'em immediately. I'll teach rascals to speak high-treason against a petty constable—— [*Exeunt.*[1]

Enter FREDERICK *and* OLD BOOKWIT.

O. Book. You well may be surprised at my waiting here for your coming home. But you'll pardon me, since it is to ease me of an anxiety that keeps me waking.

Fred. I shall be very glad if I am capable of doing that.

O. Book.[2] You knew my Tom at Oxford, and I believe were not so hard a student, but you made some acquaintance in the town—therefore, pray tell me, do

[1] It is interesting to compare this constable with the Dogberry and Verges of *Much Ado about Nothing*, especially Act IV. Scene ii.

[2] The following dialogue is adapted from *Le Menteur*, V. i. Cf. Foote's *Liar*, II. iv.

you know Mr. Newtown there—his family, descent, and fortune?

Fred. What Newtown?

O. Book. I'll tell you, sir, what you young fellows take most notice of old ones for—a token that you needs must know him by—he's the father of the fair Matilda, your celebrated beauty of that town.

Fred. I assure you, sir, I never heard of the father or daughter till this instant; therefore I'm confident there's no such beauty.

O. Book. Oh, sir, I know your drift—you're tender of informing me for my son's sake! He told me all himself. I know all the progress of his love with the young lady; how he was taken in the night in her bedchamber by his pistol going off, the family disturbance that was raised upon it, which he composed by marrying—I know it all.

Fred. Is Tom Bookwit then married at Oxford?

O. Book. He is, indeed, sir; therefore our affairs are now so linked that 'twill be an ill office both to the Newtowns and to us to conceal anything from me that relates to them.

Fred. A man can't be said to conceal what he does not know—— But it seems it was Mr. Bookwit gave you this account himself.

O. Book. Yes, sir; I told you, sir, I had it from himself.

Fred. Then I'm sure there was nothing left out; he never tells a story by halves.

O. Book. Why, then, you think my son's a liar.

Fred. Oh fie, sir, but he enlivens a mere narration with variety of accidents; to be plain, his discourse gains him more applause than credit. You could not, I believe, have married your son to a less expensive lady in England than this Mrs. Matilda. I'll be sworn you'll avoid all the charge of gay dress, high play, and stately childbirth. You understand me, sir?

O. Book. I never could see anything in my son that's disingenuous, to put his aged father to this shame.

Fred. Never fret or grieve for it. He told Lovemore this morning such a relation of his feasting ladies, and I know not what, that he has brought a tilt upon his hands to-morrow morning; therefore keep him at home. I'll to his adversary, so we'll convince him of a fault which has so ill (though not intended) consequences.

O. Book. You'll highly oblige me, sir; I'll trouble you no longer. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Newgate.*

YOUNG BOOKWIT, LATINE, SIMON, STORM, *with the crowd of Gaol-birds.*

Storm. I apprehend, sir, by Mr. Turnkey, the gentleman there with a broken nose, that you're brought in for murder. I honour you, sir; I don't question but 'twas done like a gentleman.

Y. Book. I hope it will appear so.

Storm. I come, I fear, sir, to your acquaintance with some prejudice, because you see me thus in irons. But affliction is the portion of the virtuous and the gallant.

Y. Book. It does not depress, sir, but manifest the brave.

Storm. Right, sir, I find you're noble. You may, perhaps, have heard of me. My name is Storm. This person, my friend, who is called Faggot, and myself, being exposed by an ungrateful world to feel its cruelty and contempt of ragged virtue, made war upon it, and in open day infested their high road.

Y. Book. Your humble servant, gentlemen, I do con-

ceive you. Your spirits could not stoop to barter on the change, to sneer in courts, to lie, to flatter, or to creep for bread. You, therefore, chose rather to prey like lions, then betray like crocodiles, or fawn like dogs. You took upon you to interrupt the commerce of a cheating world, to unload the usurer of his anxious pelf, and save the thoughtless landed boy he travelled to undo, with a thousand such good actions; by which means you two are infamous, for what two millions of you had been glorious.

Storm. Right, sir; I see you're knowing, sir, and learned in man. This gentleman, Mr. Charcoal, the chemist, was our secret correspondent, and as we never robbed a poor man, so he never cheated a fool, but still imposed on your most sprightly wits and genius—fellows of fire and metal, whose quick fancies and eager wishes formed reasons for their undoing. He is a follower of the great Raimundus Lullius; the public think to frighten him into their own purposes. But he'll leave the ungrateful world without the secret.

Char. You know, sir, he that first asserted the Antipodes died for that knowledge; and I, sir, having found out the melioration of metals, the ignorant will needs call it coining; and I am to be hanged for it, would you think it?

Y. Book. When, pray sir, are you to be immortal?

Char. On Friday next. I'm very unhappy our acquaintance is to be short. I'm very sorry your business is not over, sir, that, if it must be, we might go together.

Y. Book. I'm highly obliged to you, sir.

Char. Yet let me tell you, sir, because by secret sympathy I'm yours, I must acquaint you, if you can obtain the favour of an opportunity and a crucible, I can show projection—directly Sol, sir, Sol, sir, more bright than that high luminary the Latins called so—wealth shall

be yours; we'll turn each bar about us into golden ingots.[1] Sir, can you lend me half-a-crown?

Y. Book. Oh, sir, a trifle between such old acquaintance.

Storm. You'll be indicted, sir, to-morrow. I would advise you, when your indictment's read, to one thing: that is, don't cavil at false Latin; but if by chance there should be a word of good, except to that, and puzzle the whole court.

Y. Book. Sir, I'm obliged——

Storm. I defy the world to say I ever did an ill thing; I love my friend. But there is always some little trifle given to prisoners they call garnish; we of the road are above it, but o't'other side of the house, silly rascals that came voluntarily hither—— such as are in for fools, signed their own mittimus, in being bound for others, —may perhaps want it. I'll be your faithful almoner.

Y. Book. Oh, by all means, sir. [*Gives him money.*

Storm. Pray, sir, is that your footman?

Y. Book. He is my friend, sir.

Storm. Look you, sir, the only time to make use of a friend is in extremity. Do you think you could not hang him and save yourself? Sir, my service to you; your own health.

1*st Pris.* Captain, your health.

[*Gives it to the next prisoner.*

2*nd Pris.* Captain, your health.

Storm. But perhaps the captain likes brandy better. So-ho! brandy there. [*Drinks.*] But you don't, perhaps, like these strong liquors. Cider, ho! [*Drinks to him in it.*] Gentlemen all! But, captain, I see you don't love cider neither. You and I will be for claret then. Ay, marry! I knew this would please [*Drinks*] you. [*Drinks again.*] Faith, we'll make an end on't; I'm glad you like it.

[1] Steele himself made experiments in alchemy.

Turn. I'm sorry, Captain Storm, to see you impose on a gentleman, and put him to charge in his misfortune. If a petty larceny fellow had done this —— but one of the road!

Storm. I beg your pardon, sir, I don't question but the captain understands there is a fee to you for going to the keeper's side. [BOOK. *and* LATINE *give him money. Exeunt with* TURNKEY, SIMON *following.*] Nay, nay, you must stay here.

Sim. Why, I am Simon, Madam Penelope's man.

Storm. Then Madam Penelope's man must strip for garnish.[1] Indeed, Master Simon, you must.

Sim. Thieves! Thieves! Thieves!

Storm. Thieves! Thieves! Why, you senseless dog, do you think there's thieves in Newgate? Away with him to the tap-house. [*Pushes him off.*] We'll drink his coat off. Come, my little chemist, thou shalt transmute this jacket into liquor; liquor that will make us forget the evil day. And while day is ours, let us be merry.

For little villains must submit to fate,
That great ones may enjoy the world in state.

[*Exeunt.*

[1] There is a similar scene in Fielding's *Amelia*, Book I., chap. iii., and particulars of the system of garnish may be found in the works of John Howard.

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*Newgate.*

BOOKWIT *discovered on a couch asleep,* LATINE *looking on him.*

LAT. How quietly he rests! Oh that I could,
By watching him, hanging thus over him,
And, feeling all his care, protract his sleep!
Oh, sleep! thou sweetest gift of Heaven to man,
Still in thy downy arms embrace my friend,
Nor loose him from his inexistent trance
To sense of yesterday and pain of being;
In thee oppressors soothe their angry brow,
In thee the oppressed forget tyrannic power,
In thee ——
The wretch condemned is equal to his judge,
And the sad lover to his cruel fair;
Nay, all the shining glories men pursue,
When thou art wanted, are but empty noise.
Who then would court the pomp of guilty power,
When the mind sickens at the weary show,
And flies to temporary death for ease;

When half our life's cessation of our being ——
He wakes ——
How do I pity that returning life,
Which I could hazard thousand lives to save!

Y. Book. How heavily do I awake this morning! Oh, this senseless drinking! To suffer a whole week's pain for an hour's jollity! Methinks my senses are burning round me. I have but interrupted hints of the last night—— Ha! in a gaol! Oh, I remember, I remember. Oh, Lovemore! Lovemore! I remember——

Lat. You must have patience, and bear it like a man.

Y. Book. Oh, whither shall I run to avoid myself?
Why all these bars? These bolted iron gates?
They're needless to secure me —— Here, here's my rack,
My gaol, my torture——
Oh, I can't bear it. I cannot bear the rushing of new thoughts;
Fancy expands my senses to distraction,
And my soul stretches to that boundless space
To which I've sent my wretched, wretched friend.
Oh, Latine! Latine! Is all our mirth and humour come to this?
Give me thy bosom, close in thy bosom hide me
From thy eyes; I cannot bear their pity or reproach.

Lat. Dear Bookwit, how heartily I love you—I don't know what to say. But pray have patience.

Y. Book. If you can't bear my pain that's but communicated by your pity, how shall I my proper inborn woe, my wounded mind?

Lat. In all assaults of fortune that should be serene,
Not in the power of accident or chance——

Y. Book. Words! words! all that is but mere talk.
Perhaps, indeed, to undeserved affliction
Reason and argument may give relief,
Or in the known vicissitudes of life

We may feel comfort by our self-persuasion;
But oh! there is no taking away guilt:
This divine particle will ache for ever.
There is no help but whence I dare not ask;
When this material organ's indisposed
Juleps can cool and anodynes give rest;
But nothing mix with this celestial drop,
But dew from that high Heaven of which 'tis part.

Lat. May that high Heaven compose your mind,
And reconcile you to yourself.

Y. Book. How can I hope it?
No—— I must descend from man,
Grovel on earth, nor dare look up again!
Oh, Lovemore! Lovemore! Where is he now?
Oh, thinking, thinking, why didst thou not come sooner?
Or not now!——
My thoughts do so confuse me now — as my folly and pleasures did before this fatal accident—that I cannot recollect whence Lovemore was provoked to challenge me.

Lat. You know, dear Bookwit, I feared some ill from a careless way of talking. But alas! I dreamt not of so great——

Y. Book. Ay, there it was; he was naturally a little jealous. Heavens, do I say he was? I talked to him of ladies, treats, and he might possibly believe 'twas where he had engaged—— I remember his serious behaviour on that subject. Oh, this unhappy tongue of mine!
Thou lawless, voluble, destroying foe,
That still run'st on, nor wait'st command of reason,
Oh, I could tear thee from me——

Lat. Did you not expostulate before the action?

Y. Book. He would have don't; but I, flushed with the thoughts of duelling, pressed on—— Thus for the empty praise of fools, I'm solidly unhappy.

Lat. You take it too deeply. Your honour was concerned.

Y. Book. Honour! The horrid application of that sacred word to a revenge against friendship, law, and reason is a damned last shift of the damned envious foe of human race. The routed fiend projected this, but since the expansive glorious law from Heaven came down ——Forgive.[1]

Enter TURNKEY.

Turn. Gentlemen, I come to tell you that you have the favour to be carried in chairs to your indictment, to which you must go immediately.

Lat. We are ready, sir.

Y. Book. How shall I bear the eyeshot of the crowd in court? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—FREDERICK'S *Lodgings.*

Enter LOVEMORE, *in a sergeant's gown, and* FREDERICK.

Love. Mankind is infinitely beholden to this noble styptic, that could produce such wonderful effects so suddenly. But though my wound was very slight, I'm weak by the effusion of so much blood.

Fred. Yet after all, you have not lost enough to cool your passion. Your heart still beats, Penelope, Penelope—— But in this disguise you have opportunity for observation. You'll see whether you ought still to value her or not. I'm glad you thought of being brought hither as soon as you came to yourself. I expect old Bookwit every moment here——

[1] This condemnation of duelling is the first of a long series in Steele's works.

Enter OLD BOOKWIT.

There he is——

O. Book. Oh, Mr. Frederick! too late, too late was our care; they met last night, and then the fatal act was done. You'll excuse, sir, a father's sorrow—— I can't speak much, but you may guess what I hope from you.

Fred. You may depend upon ingenuous usage in the prosecution. I'm going instantly to Penelope's with this learned gentleman, to know what she can say to this matter. I desired you, in the note I sent you, to purchase the favour of your son's being brought thither, where he and you may be witnesses of what shall pass. I seek not his blood, nor would neglect a justice to my deceased friend.

O. Book. I believe my son and the rest are going thither ere this; and I desire this worthy sergeant's favour and advice, since we both mean the same thing —only to act with honour, if his life may be saved.

Love. I'll do what's just to the deceased and the survivor.

O. Book. I'll leave you, but will take care to come in just afore the criminals arrive. [*Exit.*

Love. The poor old gentleman! Prithee, let's go; I long to see my lovely torment, Penelope.

Fred. I'll but leave word within. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—PENELOPE'S *Lodgings.*

Enter PENELOPE *and* VICTORIA.

Pen. It seems Simon lay out all night, and was carried away by the watch with some gentlemen in a quarrel.

Vict. I fancy the men who are always for showing

their valour are like the women who are always talking of their chastity, because they are conscious of their defect in it.

Pen. Right; for we are not apt to raise arguments but about what we think is disputable.

Vict. Ay, ay, they whose honour is a sore part are more fearful of being touched than they in whom 'tis only a tender one. But tell me honestly, Penelope, should poor Lovemore be in this rencounter, and that for your sake, would it have no effect upon you in his favour?

Pen. I don't know how to answer you; but I find something in that reflection which acquaints me 'tis very hard for one to know one's own heart. [*Sighs.*

Vict. However, let your heart answer me one question more, as well as it can. Does it love me as well as ever it did?

Pen. Does not, madam, that question proceed from a change in your own?

Vict. It does, Penelope; I own it does—— I had a long conflict with myself on my pillow last night.

Pen. What were your thoughts there?

Vict. That I owed it to our friendship to acknowledge to you that all the pleasure I once had in you is vanished. Ah, Penelope! I'm sorry for every good quality you have.

Pen. Since you are so frank, I must confess to you something very like this. But however I envied that sprightly, ingenuous, native beauty of yours, I see it now so much the figure of your mind that I can conquer, I think I can, any inclination in myself that opposes the happiness of so sincere a friend.

Vict. Explain yourself, my dear.

Pen. I'll discountenance this Bookwit's ambiguous addresses; and if Lovemore can forgive my late ill-usage——I need say no more.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Frederick below desires to see you on some extraordinary business.

Vict. I have not time, my dearest friend, to applaud or thank you, but must run in—— He comes from Lovemore——remember. [*Exit.*

Pen. Let him come up—— Now can't I for my life forbear a little tyranny.

Enter FREDERICK *and* LOVEMORE.

Pen. Good morrow, sir. I believe I know your business: you're officious for your friend—— But I am deaf.

Fred. I know you are, and have been; but I come only to do him a last office. He'll trouble you no more, but I must conjure you to read this, and inform this learned gentleman what you know of this misfortune.

Pen. [*Reading.*] "Your cruelty provoked me to desire the favour of dying by Mr. Bookwit's hand, since he had taken from me more than life in robbing me of you—— farewell for ever—— I direct Frederick not to give you this till I am no more." Writ in his blood!—— "Till I am no more!" Lovemore no more! Thou shalt not be no more—— thou shalt live here for ever. Here, thou dearest paper, mingle with my life's stream; either the paper bleeds anew, or my eyes weep blood. So let 'em do for ever—— Oh, my Lovemore! did the vanity of a prating boy banish thy solid services and manly love?

Fred. This is no reparation to him for his lost life, nor me for my lost friend. Yet when you please to receive 'em, I am obliged to deliver you some papers, wherein he has given you all the fortune he could bestow, nor would revoke it, even thus injured as he was.

Pen. Curse on all wealth and fortune! He—he is gone who only deserved all, and whose worth I know too late!

Love. [*To Fred.*] Oh, ecstasy! Why was I angry at her rejoicing at my sorrow, when hers to me is such a perfect bliss? 'Tis barbarous not to discover myself.

Fred. [*To Love.*] Do, and be used barbarously—— But, madam, you must be composed. Your life, for ought I know, is at stake; for there is no such thing as accessories in murder; and it can be proved you knew of Lovemore's threatening to fight Bookwit. You must either take your trial yourself, or be Mr. Bookwit's witness.

Pen. I his witness! No, I'll swear anything to hang him.

Fred. Ah, madam, you must consider yourself, however—— Pray, sir, read her indictment to her.

Love. [*Reading.*] "That on the said third day of April the said Penelope, of the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, spinster, without fear before her eyes, but by the instigation of the devil, and through an evil pride of heart——"

Pen. 'Tis too true—— [*Weeping.*

Love. "Did contrive, abet, and consent to the death of John Lovemore, Esq., of the age of twenty-eight years, or thereabouts."

Fred. I can't hear the mention of him without tears. He was the sincerest friend.

Love. I think I have seen him. He was, I've heard, a man of honesty, but of something a disagreeable make.

Pen. Oh, sir, you never saw him if you think so—— His person was as free as his mind was honest, nor had he imperfection, but his love of me. [*Weeps.*

Love. [*To Fred.*] I tremble I shall disoblige her too much.

Fred. [*To Love.*] You shan't discover yourself, you shall go through her soul, now 'tis moved on our side. Win her now, or see my face no more; I'll not have my wine spoiled every night with your recitals of love, and asking

advice, though you never mean to take it, like a true lover.

Pen. When did that best of men expire, good Mr. Frederick?

Fred. This morning. But should I speak the manner? With a faint, dying voice he called me to him. I went in tenderness to take my long farewell. He, in a last effort of nature, pressed me to his breast, and, with the softest accent, sighed in death—"Penelope."

Pen. Oh, the too generous man! Ungrateful I!
Curses on him first flattered with his tongue,
On her that first dissembled in her silence——
What miseries have they entailed on life
To bring in fraud and diffidence of love!
Simplicity's the dress of honest passion,
Then why our arts, why to a man enamoured,
That at her feet effuses all his soul,
Must woman cold appear, false to herself and him?

Fred. [*To Love.*] Do you see there? You'd have spoke before she considered that.

Pen. Oh, could I see him now, to press his livid lips,
And call him back to life with my complaints,
His eyes would glare upon my guilt with horror,
That used to gloat and melt in love before me.
Let mine for ever then be shut to joy,
To all that's bright and valuable in man!
I'll to his sacred ashes be a wife,
And to his memory devote my life. [*Exit.*

Love. This is worth dying for indeed. I'll follow her.

Fred. No, you shan't; let her go in, throw herself upon her bed, and hug, and call her pillow "Lovemore." 'Tis but what you've done a thousand times for her.

Love. That's true too.

Fred. Let her contemplate on the mischief of her vanity. She shall lament till her glass is of our side—till its pretty nies be all blubbered; its heart must heave

and pant with perfect anguish before 'twill feel the sorrow of another's. Don't you know, pride, scorn, affectation, and a whole train of ills must be sobbed away before a great beauty's mortified to purpose?

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Old Mr. Bookwit enquires for you here, Mr. Frederick.

Fred. Pray, let him come up.

Enter OLD BOOKWIT.

Love. What's the matter? You seem more discomposed than you were at Mr. Frederick's. Something still new?

O. Book. I saw the boy a-coming in a chair; he looks so languid and distressed, poor lad! He has all his mother's softness, by nature of the sweetest disposition. Oh, gentlemen, you know not what it is to be a father! To see my only child in that condition—— My grief quickened at the sight of him. I thought I could have patience till I saw him.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. There are two or three in chairs desire admittance by appointment.

O. Book. 'Tis right, sir.

Enter BOOKWIT, LATINE, *and* GAOLER.

Oh, my dear child! Oh, Tom! are all thy aged father's hopes, then, come to this, that he can't see thee, his only son, but guarded by a gaoler? Thy mother's happy that lived not to see this day. Is all the nurture that she gave thy infancy, the erudition she bequeathed thy youth, thus answered? Oh, my son! my son! rise and support thy father! I sink with tenderness, my child; come to my arms while thou art mine.

Y. Book. Oh, best of fathers!

Let me not see your tears,
Don't double my afflictions by your woe——
There's consolation when a friend laments us, but
When a parent grieves, the anguish is too native,
Too much our own to be called pity.
Oh, sir, consider; I was born to die.
'Tis but expanding thought, and life is nothing.
Ages and generations pass away,
And with resistless force, like waves o'er waves,
Roll down the irrevocable stream of time
Into the insatiate ocean for ever—— Thus we are gone.
But the erroneous sense of man—'tis the lamented
That's at rest, but the survivor mourns.
All my sorrows vanish with that thought,
But Heaven grant my aged father patience!

O. Book. Oh, child! [*Turning away.*

Y. Book. Do not torment yourself, you shall promise not to grieve.
What if they do upbraid you with my death?
Consider, sir, in death that our relation ceases;
Nor shall I want your care, or know your grief.
It matters not whether by law, or nature, 'tis I die.
What, won't my father hear me plead to him?
Don't turn from me——
Yet don't look at me with your soul so full.

O. Book. Oh, my child! my child! I could hear thee ever.
'Twas that I loved thee that I turn away;
To hear my son persuade me to resign him,
I can't, I can't. The grief is insupportable.

Y. Book. You make a coward of me with your anguish.
I grow an infant, scarce can weep with silence;
But let me keep some decency in my distress.

O. Book. If we might be apart—
[*Looking at the company.*
But that's too much to hope.

Gaol. No, no, we'll leave you to yourselves. [*Exeunt.*

O. Book. I have too much upon me, child, to speak—and, indeed, have nothing to say, but to feed my eyes upon thee e'er we part for ever, if tears would let me. When you have slept in your cradle, I have waked for you—and was it to this end! Oh, child, you've broke your father's heart. [*Swoons.*

Y. Book. Good Heav'n forbid it—guard him and protect him.

He faints, he's cold, he's gone; [*Running to him.*
He's gone, and with his last breath called me parricide.
"You've broke your father's heart!" Oh, killing sound!
I'm all contagion; to pity me is death:
My griefs to all are mortal but myself.
"You've broke your father's heart!" If I did so,
Why thus serene in death, thou smiling clay?
Why that calm aspect to thy murderer?
Oh, big unutterable grief——merciful Heaven!
I don't deserve this ease of tears to melt
With penitence—Oh, sweet, sweet remorse;
Now all my powers give way
To my just sorrow, for the best of fathers. [*Aloud.*
Thou venerable fountain of my life,
Why don't I also die, derived from thee?
Sure you are not gone—Is the way out of life
Thus easy, which you so much feared in me?
[*Takes him by the hand.*
Why stay I after? But I deserve to stay,
To feel the quick remembrance of my follies.
Yet if my sighs, my tears, my anguish can atone——

Re-enter FREDERICK, LOVEMORE, LATINE, GAOLER, VICTORIA, *and* PENELOPE.

Fred. What is the matter? What——

Y. Book. Behold this sight! I am the guilty wretch—

Fred. Keep aside a little, sir, he only swoons, I hope.

I think he breathes—yes, he returns. You must compose yourself.

Lat. Poor Bookwit! how utterly he seems distressed!

O. Book. I will be calm—resign to Heaven—and hear you patiently.

Fred. You, sir, his favourite servant, pray speak honestly the truth of what you know to this learned gentleman, who is counsel in this case.

Y. Book. Sir, he is not——

Love. Pray, sir, give the servant leave first.

Lat. Know, then, I am not what I seem, but a gentleman of a plentiful fortune. I am thus dressed to carry on such gay pursuits as should offer in this town. Not to detain you, Mr. Bookwit sent me late last night with a letter to one of these ladies. Coming from thence, as I crossed, I saw Lovemore in the Garden. He stopped me, and, after some questions concerning my message to this house, to which he did not like my answers, he struck me. We fought—I left him dead upon the spot; of which this gentleman is guiltless.

O. Book. How! was it you, then, that killed Mr. Lovemore?

Lat. 'Twas this unhappy hand gave him his death, but so provoked—

Y. Book. Who could believe that any pleasing passion
Could touch a breast loaded with guilt like mine?
But all my mind is seized with admiration
Of thy stupendous friendship. What then—
Could'st thou hold thy innocent hand up at a bar
With felons, to save thy friend?
How shall I chide or praise thy brave imposture?
Ah, sir, believe him not! He cannot bear the loss of me whom he o'ervalues; therefore with highest gallantry he offers a benefit which 'twere the meanest baseness to receive.
But death's more welcome than a life so purchased.

Lat. We all know you can talk, and gild things as you please, but the lady's servant knows I was taken near the body when you——

Y. Book. Sir, do but hear me— [*Pushing away* LAT.

Lat. I'll easily convince you— [*Pushing away* BOOK.

Y. Book. Pray mind him not, his brain is touched—

Lat. I am the man, he was not near the place——

Love. I can hold out no longer.—Lovemore still lives to adore your noble friendship, and begs a share in't. Be not amazed! but let me grasp you both, who, in an age degenerate as this, have such transcendent virtue—

Y. Book. Oh, Lovemore! Lovemore! how shall I speak my joy at thy recovery—
I fail beneath the too ecstatic pleasure.
What help has human nature from its sorrows,
When our relief itself is such a burthen?

O. Book. Oh, the best burthen upon earth!—I beg your pardon, sir—I never was so taken with a man in my life at first sight. [*Kisses* LOVE.] Let me be known to you too. [*To* LAT.

Lat. Sir, you do me honour.

O. Book. But you, ladies, are the first cause of the many errors we have been in, and you only can extricate us with satisfaction. Such is the force of beauty. The wounds the sword gave this gentleman were slight, but you've transfixed a vital and a noble part—his heart. Had I known his pretences, I had not interposed for my son.

Fred. Come, madam, no more of the cruel—go on, Lovemore; o' my conscience, the man's afraid 'tis impudence to be alive again. You see him now, madam; now you may press his livid lips, and call him back to life with your complaints.

Love. I stand, methinks, on the brink of fate, in an ambiguous interval of life, and doubt to accept of being till you smile. In every human incident besides

I am superior, and can choose or leave;
But in minutest things that touch my love,
My bosom's seized with anguish or with transport.

Pen. You've shown your passion to me with such honour that if I am confused, I know I should not be, to say I approve it; for I know no rules should make me insensible of generous usage. My person and my mind are yours for ever.

Love. Then doubts, and fears, and anxious cares be gone,
All ye black thoughts that did corrode my breast;
Here enter faith, and confidence, and love!
Love that can't live with jealousy, but dwells
With sacred marriage, truth, and mutual honour.
I knew not where you would bestow your vows,
But never doubted of your faith when given.

[*Kissing her hand.*

O. Book. You see, my son, how constancy's rewarded! You have from nature every quality
To make you well become what fortune gave you;
But neither wit nor beauty, wealth nor courage,
Implicitly deserve the world's esteem;
They're only in their application good.
How could you fight a man you knew not why?
You don't think that 'tis great merely to dare?
'Tis that a man is just he should be bold.
Indeed you've erred.

Lat. You give my friend, methinks, too much compunction for a little levity in his actions—when he's too severe in his own reflections on 'em.

Pen. Well, Victoria, you see I take your advice at last in choice of Lovemore.

Vict. I congratulate your missing of the other.

Pen. I heartily believe you, my dear friend.

O. Book. But we best guide our actions by hopes of reward. Could but my son have such a glorious pros-

pect as this fair one. [*To* VICTORIA.] I doubt not but his future carriage would deserve her.

Vict. I believe I may safely promise to approve of all the truth he tells me.

Y. Book. You've promised, then, to like all I shall say.

O. Book. These unexpected good events deserve our celebration with some mirth and fiddles.

Fred. I foresaw this happy turn, therefore have prepared 'em. Call in the dancers.

Song, by MR. LEVERIDGE.

I.

THE rolling years the joys restore,
Which happy, happy Britain knew,
When in a female age before
Beauty the sword of justice drew.

II.

Nymphs and fawns, and rural powers,
Of crystal floods and shady bowers,
No more shall here preside;
The flowing wave and living green,
Owe only to their present queen
Their safety and their pride.

III.

United air and pleasures bring,
Of tender note and tuneful string,
All your arts devoted are
To move the innocent and fair.
While they receive the pleasing wound,
Echo repeats the dying sound.

Y. Book. Since such deserved misfortunes they must share,
Who with gay falsehoods entertain the fair;
Let all with this just maxim guide their youth,
There is no gallantry in love but truth. [*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

Our too advent'rous author soared to-night
Above the little praise, mirth to excite,
And chose with pity to chastise delight.
For laughter's a distorted passion, born
Of sudden self-esteem and sudden scorn;
Which, when 'tis o'er, the men in pleasure wise,
Both him that moved it and themselves despise;
While generous pity of a painted woe
Makes us ourselves both more approve and know.
What is that touch within which nature gave
For man to man e'er fortune made a slave?
Sure it descends from that dread Power alone,
Who levels thunder from His awful throne,
And shakes both worlds — yet hears the wretched groan.
'Tis what the ancient sage could ne'er define,
Wondered—and called part human, part divine;
'Tis that pure joy which guardian angels know,
When timely they assist their care below,
When they the good protect, the ill oppose;
'Tis what our sovereign feels when she bestows,
Which gives her glorious cause such high success,
That only on the stage you see distress.

THE TENDER HUSBAND:

OR

THE ACCOMPLISHED FOOLS.

"Oportet ut is qui audiat cogitet plura quam videat."
CICERO DE ORATORE.

The hearer should ponder over more things than he sees.

STEELE'S third play, *The Tender Husband : or, the Accomplished Fools, a Comedy*, was given to Rich, of the Theatre Royal, in March, 1705, and was produced on April 23, when it ran for five nights, "with several entertainments of singing by Mrs. Tofts, and dancing"; and again in May and June. The profits were but small. The play was published by Tonson on the 9th of May. It was acted several times nearly every year between 1705 and 1736, and occasionally afterwards. In 1760, Garrick appeared as Sir Harry Gubbin, and in 1802, Charles Kemble and Mrs. Jordan acted in the piece. Mills (Clerimont, Sen.), Wilks (Capt. Clerimont), Estcourt (Pounce), Bullock (Sir Harry Gubbin), Pinkethman (Humphry Gubbin), Norris (Tipkin), Mrs. Powell (Aunt), and Mrs. Oldfield (Niece), were in the original cast. Steele was indebted for some ideas in the fourth Act to Molière's *Sicilien : ou, l'Amour Peintre*, and possibly to Cibber's *Careless Husband*, which had recently appeared. In No. 555 of the *Spectator* he said that "many applauded strokes" in the piece were from Addison's hand. Fielding, Goldsmith, and Sheridan had Steele's play in view when they created the characters of Squire Western, Tony Lumpkin, and Lydia Languish. The phrase "accomplished fools" had been used by Steele in the *Lying Lover* (p. 148).

To

MR. ADDISON.[1]

SIR,

YOU'LL be surprised, in the midst of a daily and familiar conversation, with an address which bears so distant an air as a public dedication. But to put you out of the pain which I know this will give you, I assure you I do not design in it, what would be very needless, a panegyric on yourself, or what, perhaps, is very necessary, a defence of the play. In the one I should discover too much the concern of an author, in the other too little the freedom of a friend.

My purpose in this application is only to show the esteem I have for you, and that I look upon my intimacy with you as one of the most valuable enjoyments of my life. At the same time I hope I make the Town no ill compliment for their kind acceptance of this Comedy, in acknowledging that it has so far raised my opinion of it, as to make me think it no improper memorial of an inviolable friendship.

[1] When this dedication was written, Addison had recently (December, 1704) published his successful poem, *The Campaign*, and was preparing his *Remarks on Italy* for the press.

I should not offer it to you as such, had I not been very careful to avoid everything that might look ill-natured, immoral, or prejudicial to what the better part of mankind hold sacred and honourable.

Poetry, under such restraints, is an obliging service to human society; especially when it is used, like your admirable vein, to recommend more useful qualities in yourself, or immortalise characters truly heroic in others. I am here in danger of breaking my promise to you, therefore shall take the only opportunity that can offer itself of resisting my own inclinations, by complying with yours. I am,

SIR,

Your most faithful,

Humble Servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

PROLOGUE.

Written by MR. ADDISON.

Spoken by MR. WILKS.[1]

IN the first rise and infancy of farce,
When fools were many, and when plays were scarce,
The raw, unpractised authors could, with ease,
A young and unexperienced audience please;
No single character had e'er been shown,
But the whole herd of fops was all their own;
Rich in originals, they set to view,
In every piece, a coxcomb that was new.

But now our British theatre can boast
Drolls of all kinds, a vast unthinking host!
Fruitful of folly and of vice, it shows
Cuckolds, and cits, and bawds, and pimps, and beaux;
Rough-country knights are found of every shire,
Of every fashion gentle fops appear;
And punks of different characters we meet,
As frequent on the stage as in the pit.
Our modern wits are forced to pick and cull,
And here and there by chance glean up a fool;
Long ere they find the necessary spark,
They search the Town and beat about the Park;
To all his most frequented haunts resort,
Oft dog him to the Ring,[2] and oft to Court;

[1] Wilks was Captain Clerimont.

[2] "The next place of resort wherein the servile world are let loose, is at the entrance of Hyde Park, while the gentry are at the

As love of pleasure or of place invites,
And sometimes catch him taking snuff at White's.[1]

However, to do you right, the present age
Breeds very hopeful monsters for the stage,
That scorn the paths their dull forefathers trod,
And won't be blockheads in the common road.
Do but survey this crowded house to-night—
Here's still encouragement for those that write.

Our author, to divert his friends to-day,
Stocks with variety of fools his play;
And that there may be something gay and new,
Two ladies errant has exposed to view;
The first a damsel, travelled in romance,
The t'other more refined—she comes from France.
Rescue, like courteous knights, the nymph from danger,
And kindly treat, like well-bred men, the stranger.

Ring" (*Spectator*, No. 88). This favourite drive and promenade was partly destroyed when the Serpentine was formed. The servants gathered round the gate, while their masters and mistresses stared at or ogled each other in the Ring.

[1] White's Chocolate-house, on the west side of St. James's Street, was founded about 1698, and the original building was burnt down in 1733. In the first number of the *Tatler*, Steele announced that "all accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment, shall be under the article of White's Chocolate-house." See, too, *Spectator*, No. 88, and Hogarth's *Rake's Progress*, Pt. IV. There was much gambling at White's, and Swift calls it "the common rendezvous of infamous sharpers and noble cullies."

A Song

Designed for the Fourth Act, but not set.

I.

See, Britons, see, with awful eyes,
Britannia from her seas arise !
Ten thousand billows round me roar,
  While winds and waves engage,
That break in froth upon my shore,
  And impotently rage.
Such were the terrors which of late
Surrounded my afflicted state ;
United fury thus was bent
  On my devoted seats,
Till all the mighty force was spent
  In feeble swells, and empty threats.

II.

But now, with rising glory crowned,
My joys run high, they know no bound ;
Tides of unruly pleasure flow
  Through every swelling vein,
New raptures in my bosom glow,
  And warm me up to youth again.
  Passing pomps my streets adorn ;
  Captive spoils, in triumph borne,
Standards of Gauls, in fight subdued,
Colours in hostile blood embrued,
  Ensigns of tyrannic might,
  Foes to equity and right,

In courts of British justice wave on high,
Sacred to law and liberty.
My crowded theatres repeat,
In songs of triumph, the defeat.
Did ever joyful mother see
So bright, so brave a progeny!
Daughters with so much beauty crowned,
Or sons for valour so renowned!

III.

But oh, I gaze and seek in vain
To find, amidst this warlike train,
My absent sons, that used to grace
With decent pride this joyous place:
Unhappy youths! how do my sorrows rise,
Swell my breast, and melt my eyes,
While I your mighty loss deplore?
Wild, and raging with distress
I mourn, I mourn my own success,
And boast my victories no more.
Unhappy youths! far from their native sky,
On Danube's banks interred they lie.
Germania, give me back my slain,
Give me my slaughtered sons again.
Was it for this they ranged so far,
To free thee from oppressive war?
Germania, &c.

IV.

Tears of sorrow while I shed
O'er the manes of my dead,
Lasting altars let me raise
To my living heroes' praise;
Heaven give them a longer stay,
As glorious actions to display,
Or perish on as great a day.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir HARRY GUBBIN, brother-in-law to Mr. TIPKIN.

HUMPHRY GUBBIN, son of Sir HARRY GUBBIN, and suitor to BIDDY TIPKIN, his cousin.

Mr. TIPKIN, a banker, BIDDY TIPKIN's uncle.

CLERIMONT, SEN.

Capt. CLERIMONT, brother of CLERIMONT, SEN.

Mr. POUNCE, a lawyer, FAINLOVE's brother.

Mrs. CLERIMONT.

AUNT (Mrs. TIPKIN).

NIECE (BIDDY TIPKIN), Mr. TIPKIN's niece.

FAINLOVE, mistress to CLERIMONT, SEN.

JENNY, maid to Mrs. CLERIMONT.

SCENE.—LONDON.

THE TENDER HUSBAND:

OR

THE ACCOMPLISHED FOOLS.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—CLERIMONT, SEN.'S *House.*

Enter CLERIMONT, SEN. *and* FAINLOVE.

LER. SEN. Well, Mr. Fainlove, how do you go on in your amour with my wife?

Fain. I am very civil and very distant; if she smiles or speaks, I bow and gaze at her; then throw down my eyes, as if oppressed by fear of offence, then steal a look again till she again sees me. This is my general method.

Cler. Sen. And it is right. For such a fine lady has no guard to her virtue but her pride; therefore you must constantly apply yourself to that. But, dear Lucy, as you have been a very faithful but a very costly wench to me, so my spouse also has been constant to my bed, but careless of my fortune.

Fain. Ah! my dear, how could you leave your poor

Lucy, and run into France to see sights, and show your gallantry with a wife? Was not that unnatural?

Cler. Sen. She brought me a noble fortune, and I thought she had a right to share it; therefore carried her to see the world, forsooth, and make the tour of France and Italy, where she learned to lose her money gracefully, to admire every vanity in our sex, and contemn every virtue in her own, which, with ten thousand other perfections, are the ordinary improvements of a travelled lady. Now I can neither mortify her vanity, that I may live at ease with her, or quite discard her, till I have catched her a little enlarging her innocent freedoms, as she calls 'em. For this end I am content to be a French husband, though now and then with the secret pangs of an Italian one; and therefore, sir, or madam, you are thus equipped to attend and accost her ladyship. It concerns you to be diligent. If we wholly part—I need say no more. If we do not—I'll see thee well provided for.

Fain. I'll do all I can, I warrant you, but you are not to expect I'll go much among the men.

Cler. Sen. No, no; you must not go near men; you are only (when my wife goes to a play) to sit in a side box with pretty fellows. I don't design you to personate a real man, you are only to be a pretty gentleman; not to be of any use or consequence in the world, as to yourself, but merely as a property to others; such as you see now and then have a life in the entail of a great estate, that seem to have come into the world only to be tags in the pedigree of a wealthy house. You must have seen many of that species.

Fain. I apprehend you; such as stand in assemblies, with an indolent softness and contempt of all around them; who make a figure in public and are scorned in private; I have seen such a one with a pocket glass to see his own face, and an effective perspective to know others. [*Imitates each.*

Cler. Sen. Ay, ay, that's my man—thou dear rogue.

Fain. Let me alone; I'll lay my life I'll horn you—that is, I'll make it appear I might if I could.

Cler. Sen. Ay, that will please me quite as well.

Fain. To show you the progress I have made, I last night won of her five hundred pounds, which I have brought you safe. [*Giving him bills.*

Cler. Sen. Oh the damned vice! That women can imagine all household care, regard to posterity, and fear of poverty, must be sacrificed to a game at cards! Suppose she had not had it to pay, and you had been capable of finding your account another way?

Fain. That's but a suppose—

Cler. Sen. I say, she must have complied with everything you asked.

Fain. But she knows you never limit her expenses.—I'll gain him from her for ever if I can. [*Aside.*

Cler. Sen. With this you have repaid me two thousand pounds, and if you did not refund thus honestly, I could not have supplied her. We must have parted.

Fain. Then you shall part—if t'other way fails—[*Aside.*]—However, I can't blame your fondness of her she has so many entertaining qualities with her vanity. Then she has such a pretty unthinking air, while she saunters round a room, and prattles sentences.

Cler. Sen. That was her turn from her infancy; she always had a great genius for knowing everything but what it was necessary she should. The wits of the age, the great beauties, and short-lived people of vogue, were always her discourse and imitation. Thus the case stood when she went to France; but her fine follies improved so daily, that though I was then proud of her being called Mr. Clerimont's wife, I am now as much out of countenance to hear myself called Mrs. Clerimont's husband, so much is the superiority of her side.

Fain. I am sure if ever I gave myself a little liberty, I never found you so indulgent.

Cler. Sen. I should have the whole sex on my back, should I pretend to retrench a lady so well visited as mine is. Therefore I must bring it about that it shall appear her own act, if she reforms; or else I shall be pronounced jealous, and have my eyes pulled out for being open. But I hear my brother Jack coming, who, I hope, has brought yours with him—Hist, not a word.

Enter CAPTAIN CLERIMONT *and* POUNCE.

Cler. I have found him out at last, brother, and brought you the obsequious Mr. Pounce; I saw him at a distance in a crowd, whispering in their turns with all about him. He is a gentleman so received, so courted, and so trusted——

Pounce. I am very glad if you saw anything like that, if the approbation of others can recommend me (where I much more desire it) to this company.

Cler. Oh, the civil person—But, dear Pounce, you know I am your professed admirer; I always celebrated you for your excellent skill and address, for that happy knowledge of the world, which makes you seem born for living with the persons you are with, wherever you come. Now my brother and I want your help in a business that requires a little more dexterity than we ourselves are masters of.

Pounce. You know, sir, my character is helping the distressed, which I do freely and without reserve; while others are for distinguishing rigidly on the justice of the occasion, and so lose the grace of the benefit. Now 'tis my profession to assist a free-hearted young fellow against an unnatural long-lived father; to disencumber men of pleasure of the vexation of unwieldy estates; to support a feeble title to an inheritance; to——

Cler. Sen. I have been well acquainted with your merits, ever since I saw you with so much compas-

sion prompt a stammering witness in Westminster Hall, that wanted instruction. I love a man that can venture his ears with so much bravery for his friend.

Pounce. Dear sir, spare my modesty, and let me know to what all this panegyric tends.

Cler. Sen. Why, sir, what I would say is in behalf of my brother, the Captain, here, whose misfortune it is that I was born before him.

Pounce. I am confident he had rather you should have been so than any other man in England.

Cler. You do me justice, Mr. Pounce, but though 'tis to that gentleman, I am still a younger brother, and you know we that are so, are generally condemned to shops, colleges, or inns of court.

Pounce. But you, sir, have escaped 'em, you have been trading in the noble mart of glory.

Cler. That's true. But the general makes such haste to finish the war, that we red coats may be soon out of fashion; and then I am a fellow of the most easy indolent disposition in the world! I hate all manner of business.

Pounce. A composed temper, indeed!

Cler. In such a case I should have no way of livelihood, but calling over this gentleman's dogs in the country, drinking his stale beer to the neighbourhood, or marrying a fortune.

Cler. Sen. To be short, Pounce—I am putting Jack upon marriage, and you are so public an envoy, or rather plenipotentiary, from the very different nations of Cheapside, Covent Garden, and St. James's; you have, too, the mien and language of each place so naturally, that you are the properest instrument I know in the world, to help an honest young fellow to favour in one of 'em, by credit in the other.

Pounce. By what I understand of your many prefaces, gentlemen, the purpose of all this is, that it would not

in the least discompose this gentleman's easy indolent disposition to fall into twenty thousand pounds, though it came upon him never so suddenly.

Cler. You are a very discerning man; how could you see so far through me, as to know I love a fine woman, pretty equipage, good company, and a clean habitation?

Pounce. Well, though I am so much a conjurer—what then?

Cler. Sen. You know a certain person, into whose hands you now and then recommend a young heir, to be relieved from the vexation of tenants, taxes, and so forth——

Pounce. What! My worthy friend and city patron Hezekiah Tipkin, banker in Lombard Street; would the noble Captain lay any sums in his hands?

Cler. No; but the noble Captain would have treasure out of his hands. You know his niece?

Pounce. To my knowledge ten thousand pounds in money.

Cler. Such a stature, such a blooming countenance, so easy a shape!

Pounce. In jewels of her grandmother's five thousand.

Cler. Her wit so lively, her mien so alluring!

Pounce. In land a thousand a year.

Cler. Her lips have that certain prominence, that swelling softness that they invite to a pressure; her eyes that languish, that they give pain, though they look only inclined to rest; her whole person that one charm——

Pounce. Raptures! Raptures!

Cler. How can it, so insensibly to itself, lead us through cares it knows not, through such a wilderness of hopes, fears, joys, sorrows, desires, despairs, ecstasies and torments, with so sweet, yet so anxious vicissitude!

Pounce. Why, I thought you had never seen her?

Cler. No more I ha'n't.

Pounce. Who told you then of her inviting lips, her soft sleepy eyes?

Cler. You yourself.

Pounce. Sure you rave, I never spoke of her afore to you.

Cler. Why, you won't face me down—Did you not just now say she had ten thousand pounds in money, five in jewels, and a thousand a year?

Pounce. I confess my own stupidity and her charms. Why, if you were to meet, you would certainly please her, you have the cant of loving; but pray, may we be free—that young gentleman.

Cler. A very honest, modest gentleman of my acquaintance, one that has much more in him than he appears to have. You shall know him better, sir; this is Mr. Pounce; Mr. Pounce, this is Mr. Fainlove; I must desire you to let him be known to you and your friends.

Pounce. I shall be proud. Well then, since we may be free, you must understand, the young lady, by being kept from the world, has made a world of her own. She has spent all her solitude in reading romances, her head is full of shepherds, knights, flowery meads, groves, and streams, so that if you talk like a man of this world to her, you do nothing.

Cler. Oh, let me alone—I have been a great traveller in fairy-land myself, I know Oroondates; Cassandra, Astræa and Clelia[1] are my intimate acquaintance.

Go my heart's envoys, tender sighs make haste,
And with your breath swell the soft zephyr's blast;
Then near that fair one if you chance to fly,
Tell her, in whispers, 'tis for her I die.

[1] *Astræa* was a French romance by Honoré d'Urfé, translated for the second time in 1657. *Clelia* was by Madame de Scudery, who lived until 1701. *Cassandra*, by Gautier de Costes, Seigneur de la Calprenède, was translated in 1652. These translations were all in folio; and they are all in the list of a lady's library given by Addison in the *Spectator*, No. 37, together with Steele's *Christian Hero*. Oroondates, in *Cassandra*, was the only son of a Scythian king.

Pounce. That would do, that would do—her very language.

Cler. Sen. Why then, dear Pounce, I know thou art the only man living that can serve him.

Pounce. Gentlemen, you must pardon me, I am soliciting the marriage settlement between her and a country booby, her cousin, Humphry Gubbin, Sir Harry's heir, who is come to town to take possession of her.

Cler. Sen. Well, all that I can say to the matter is, that a thousand pounds on the day of Jack's marriage to her, is more than you'll get by the despatch of those deeds.

Pounce. Why, a thousand pounds is a pretty thing, especially when 'tis to take a lady fair out of the hands of an obstinate ill-bred clown, to give her to a gentle swain, a dying enamoured knight.

Cler. Sen. Ay, dear Pounce, consider but that—the justice of the thing.

Pounce. Besides, he is just come from the glorious Blenheim![1] Look ye, Captain, I hope you have learned an implicit obedience to your leaders.

Cler. 'Tis all I know.

Pounce. Then, if I am to command, make not one step without me. And since we may be free, I am also to acquaint you, there will be more merit in bringing this matter to bear than you imagine. Yet right measures make all things possible.

Cler. We'll follow yours exactly.

Pounce. But the great matter against us is want of time, for the nymph's uncle, and 'squire's father, this morning met, and made an end of the matter. But the

[1] This and another reference to the battle of Blenheim, fought in August, 1704, ought to have been sufficient to prevent writers constantly repeating the statement that the *Tender Husband* was produced in 1703.

difficulty of a thing, Captain, shall be no reason against attempting it.

Cler. I have so great an opinion of your conduct, that I warrant you we conquer all.

Pounce. I am so intimately employed by old Tipkin, and so necessary to him, that I may, perhaps, puzzle things yet.

Cler. Sen. I have seen thee cajole the knave very dexterously.

Pounce. Why, really, sir, generally speaking, 'tis but knowing what a man thinks of himself, and giving him that, to make him what else you please. Now Tipkin is an absolute Lombard Street wit, a fellow that drolls on the strength of fifty thousand pounds. He is called on change, Sly-boots, and by the force of a very good credit, and very bad conscience, he is a leading person. But we must be quick, or he'll sneer old Sir Harry out of his senses, and strike up the sale of his niece immediately.

Cler. But my rival, what's he?

Pounce. There's some hopes there, for I hear the booby is as averse as his father is inclined to it. One is as obstinate as the other is cruel.

Cler. Sen. He is, they say, a pert blockhead, and very lively out of his father's sight.

Pounce. He that gave me his character called him a docile dunce, a fellow rather absurd, than a direct fool. When his father's absent, he'll pursue anything he's put upon. But we must not lose time. Pray be you two brothers at home to wait for any notice from me, while that pretty gentleman and I, whose face I have known, take a walk and look about for 'em—So, so, young lady! [*Aside to* FAINLOVE.]

SCENE II.—*St. James's Park.*

Enter SIR HARRY GUBBIN *and* TIPKIN.

Sir Har. Look ye, brother Tipkin, as I told you before, my business in town is to dispose of an hundred head of cattle, and my son.

Tip. Brother Gubbin, as I signified to you in my last, bearing date September 13th, my niece has a thousand pounds per annum, and because I have found you a plain-dealing man (particularly in the easy pad you put into my hands last summer), I was willing you should have the refusal of my niece, provided that I have a discharge from all retrospects while her guardian, and one thousand pounds for my care.

Sir Har. Ay, but brother, you rate her too high, the war has fetched down the price of women; the whole nation is overrun with petticoats; our daughters lie upon our hands, Brother Tipkin; girls are drugs, sir, mere drugs.

Tip. Look ye, Sir Harry, let girls be what they will, a thousand pounds a year, is a thousand pounds a year; and a thousand pounds a year is neither girl nor boy.

Sir Har. Look ye, Mr. Tipkin, the main article with me is, that foundation of wive's rebellion, and husband's cuckoldom, that cursed pin-money. Five hundred pounds per annum pin-money!

Tip. The word pin-money, Sir Harry, is a term.

Sir Har. It is a term, brother, we never had in our family, nor ever will. Make her jointure in widowhood accordingly large, but four hundred pounds a year is enough to give no account of.

Tip. Well, Sir Harry, since you can't swallow these pins, I will abate to four hundred pounds.

Sir Har. And to mollify the article, as well as specify the uses, we'll put in the names of several female utensils, as needles, knitting-needles, tape, thread, scissors, bodkins, fans, play-books, with other toys of that

nature. And now, since we have as good as concluded on the marriage, it will not be improper that the young people see each other.

Tip. I don't think it prudent till the very instant of marriage, lest they should not like one another.

Sir Har. They shall meet—As for the young girl, she cannot dislike Numps; and for Numps, I never suffered him to have anything he liked in his life. He'll be here immediately; he has been trained up from his childhood under such a plant as this in my hand—I have taken pains in his education.

Tip. Sir Harry, I approve your method; for since you have left off hunting you might otherwise want exercise, and this is a subtle expedient to preserve your own health and your son's good manners.

Sir Har. It has been the custom of the Gubbins to preserve severity and discipline in their families: I myself was caned the day before my wedding.

Tip. Ay, Sir Harry, had you not been well cudgelled in your youth, you had never been the man you are.

Sir Har. You say right, sir, now I feel the benefit of it. There's a crab-tree near your house which flourishes for the good of my posterity, and has brushed our jackets from father to son, for several generations.

Tip. I am glad to hear you have all things necessary for the family within yourselves.

Sir Har. Oh, yonder, I see Numps is coming—I have dressed him in the very suit I had on at my own wedding; 'tis a most becoming apparel.

Enter HUMPHRY GUBBIN.

Tip. Truly, the youth makes a good marriageable figure.

Sir Har. Come forward, Numps; this is your uncle Tipkin, your mother's brother, Numps, that is so kind as to bestow his niece upon you.—Don't be so glum, sirrah,

don't bow to a man with a face as if you'd knock him down, don't, sirrah. [*Apart.*

Tip. I am glad to see you, cousin Humphry.—He is not talkative, I observe already.

Sir Har. He is very shrewd, sir, when he pleases.—Do you see this crab-stick, you dog? [*Apart.*]—Well, Numps, don't be out of humour.—Will you talk? [*Apart.*]—Come, we're your friends, Numps; come, lad.

Hump. You are a pure fellow for a father. This is always your tricks, to make a great fool of one before company. [*Apart to his father.*

Sir Har. Don't disgrace me, sirrah, you grim, graceless rogue—[*Apart.*]—Brother, he has been bred up to respect and silence before his parents. Yet did you but hear what a noise he makes sometimes in the kitchen, or the kennel—he's the loudest of 'em all.

Tip. Well, Sir Harry, since you assure me he can speak, I'll take your word for it.

Hump. I can speak when I see occasion, and I can hold my tongue when I see occasion.

Sir Har. Well said, Numps—Sirrah, I see you can do well, if you will. [*Apart.*

Tip. Pray walk up to me, cousin Humphry.

Sir Har. Ay, walk to and fro between us with your hat under your arm.—Clear up your countenance. [*Apart.*

Tip. I see, Sir Harry, you han't set him a-capering under a French dancing-master. He does not mince it. He has not learned to walk by a courant or a boree[1]. His paces are natural, Sir Harry.

Hump. I don't know, but 'tis so we walk in the West of England.

[1] "The *corant* is a melody or air consisting of three crotchets in a bar, but moving by quavers, in the measure of $\frac{3}{4}$, with two strains or reprises, each beginning with an odd quaver. Of dance tunes it is said to be the most solemn." "The *bouree* is supposed to come from Auvergne, in France; it seldom occurs but in compositions of French mas'ers." (Hawkins's *History of Music*, IV. 387—8, 390).

Sir Har. Ay, right, Numps, and so we do. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, brother, observe his make, none of your lath-backed wishy-washy breed. Come hither, Numps—Can't you stand still? [*Apart.*]

[*Measuring his shoulders.*

Tip. I presume this is not the first time, Sir Harry, you have measured his shoulders with your cane.

Sir Har. Look ye, brother, two foot and a-half in the shoulders.

Tip. Two foot and a-half? We must make some settlement on the younger children.

Sir Har. Not like him, quotha'!

Tip. He may see his cousin when he pleases.

Hump. But harkee, uncle, I have a scruple I had better mention before marriage than after.

Tip. What's that? What's that?

Hump. My cousin, you know, is akin to me, and I don't think it lawful for a young man to marry his own relations.[1]

Sir Har. Harkee, harkee, Numps, we have got a way to solve all that.—Sirrah! Consider this cudgel! Your cousin! suppose I'd have you marry your grandmother; what then? [*Apart.*

Tip. Well, has your father satisfied you in the point, Mr. Humphry?

Hump. Ay, ay, sir, very well. I have not the least scruple remaining; no, no—not in the least, sir.

Tip. Then harkee, brother, we'll go take a whet and settle the whole affair.

[1] Tony Lumpkin, like Humphry, "boggled a little" at marrying his cousin. See *She Stoops to Conquer*, Act I., Scene II.:—

"*Tony.* What do you follow me for, cousin Con? I wonder you're not ashamed to be so very engaging.

"*Miss Neville.* I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame.

"*Tony.* Ay, but I know what sort of a relation you want to make me, though; but it won't do. I tell you, cousin Con, it won't do; so I beg you'll keep your distance; I want no nearer relationship."

Sir Har. Come, we'll leave Numps here: he knows the way—Not marry your own relations, sirrah! [*Apart.*

[*Exeunt.*

Hump. Very fine, very fine! How prettily this park is stocked with soldiers, and deer, and ducks, and ladies! —Ha! where are the old fellows gone? where can they be tro'——I'll ask these people.

Enter POUNCE *and* FAINLOVE.

Hump. Ha, you pretty young gentleman, did you see my father?

Fain. Your father, sir?

Hump. A weazel-faced cross old gentleman with spindle-shanks?

Fain. No, sir.

Hump. A crab-tree stick in his hand?

Pounce. We han't met anybody with these marks; but sure I have seen you before—Are not you Mr. Humphry Gubbin, son and heir to Sir Henry Gubbin?

Hump. I am his son and heir—but how long I shall be so I can't tell, for he talks every day of disinheriting me.

Pounce. Dear sir, let me embrace you—Nay, don't be offended if I take the liberty to kiss you. Mr. Fainlove, pray [FAINLOVE *kisses*] kiss the gentleman—Nay, dear sir, don't stare and be surprised, for I have had a desire to be better known to you ever since I saw you one day clinch your fist at your father when his back was turned upon you; for I must own I very much admire a young gentleman of spirit.

Hump. Why, sir, would it not vex a man to the heart to have an old fool snubbing a body every minute afore company?

Pounce. Oh fie, he uses you like a boy.

Hump. Like a boy! He lays me on now and then as if I were one of his hounds. You can't think what a

rage he was in this morning because I boggled a little at marrying my own cousin.

Pounce. A man can't be too scrupulous, Mr. Humphry—a man can't be too scrupulous.

Hump. Sir, I could as soon love my own flesh and blood; we should squabble like brother and sister; do you think we should not? Mr. —— Pray, gentlemen, may I crave the favour of your names?

Pounce. Sir, I am the very person that has been employed to draw up the articles of marriage between you and your cousin.

Hump. Ay, say you so? Then you can inform me in some things concerning myself—Pray, sir, what estate am I heir to?

Pounce. To fifteen hundred pounds a year, an entailed estate.

Hump. I am glad to hear it with all my heart; and can you satisfy me in another question—Pray how old am I at present?

Pounce. Three-and-twenty last March.

Hump. Why, as sure as you are there, they have kept me back. I have been told by some of the neighbourhood that I was born the very year the pigeon-house was built, and everybody knows the pigeon-house is three-and-twenty. Why! I find there have been tricks played me. I have obeyed him all along, as if I had been obliged to it.

Pounce. Not at all, sir; your father can't cut you out of one acre of fifteen hundred pounds a year.

Hump. What a fool have I been to give him his head so long!

Pounce. A man of your beauty and fortune may find out ladies enough that are not akin to you.

Hump. Look ye, Mr. what d'ye call — as to my beauty, I don't know but they may take a liking to that. But, sir, mayn't I crave your name?

Pounce. My name, sir, is Pounce, at your service.

Hump. Pounce, with a P?

Pounce. Yes, sir, and Samuel, with an S.

Hump. Why, then, Mr. Samuel Pounce, do you know any gentlewoman that you think I could like? For, to tell you truly, I took an antipathy to my cousin ever since my father proposed her to me; and since everybody knows I came up to be married, I don't care to go down and look balked.

Pounce. I have a thought just come into my head—Do you see this young gentleman? He has a sister, a prodigious fortune. 'Faith, you two shall be acquainted.

Fain. I can't pretend to expect so accomplished a gentleman as Mr. Humphry for my sister, but being your friend, I'll be at his service in the affair.

Hump. If I had your sister, she and I should live like two turtles.

Pounce. Mr. Humphry, you shan't be fooled any longer; I'll carry you into company. Mr. Fainlove, you shall introduce him to Mrs. Clerimont's toilet.

Fain. She'll be highly taken with him; for she loves a gentleman whose manner is particular.

Pounce. What, sir, a person of your pretensions, a clear estate, no portions to pay! 'Tis barbarous, your treatment.—Mr. Humphry, I'm afraid you want money. There's for you—What, a man of your accomplishments! [*Giving a purse.*

Hump. And yet you see, sir, how they use me. Dear sir, you are the best friend I ever met with in all my life. Now I am flush of money, bring me to your sister, and I warrant you for my behaviour—A man's quite another thing with money in his pocket, you know.

Pounce. How little the oaf wonders why I should give him money! [*Aside*].—You shall never want, Mr. Humphry, while I have it, Mr. Humphry; but, dear friend, I must take my leave of you; I have some extraordinary

business on my hands. I can't stay; but you must not say a word.

Fain. But you must be in the way half-an-hour hence, and I'll introduce you at Mrs. Clerimont's.

Pounce. Make 'em believe you are willing to have your cousin Bridget, till opportunity serves. Farewell, dear friend. [*Exit* POUNCE *and* FAIN.

Hump. Farewell, good Mr. Samuel Pounce.—But let's see my cash—'tis very true, the old saying, a man meets with more friendship from strangers than his own relations—Let's see my cash: 1, 2, 3, 4, there on that side; 1, 2, 3, 4, on that side; 'tis a foolish thing to put all one's money in one pocket; 'tis like a man's whole estate in one county—These five in my fob—I'll keep these in my hand, lest I should have a present occasion. —But this town's full of pickpockets; I'll go home again. [*Exit whistling.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE.—*The Park.*

Enter POUNCE, *and* CAPTAIN CLERIMONT *with his arm in a scarf.*

POUNCE. You are now well enough instructed both in the aunt and niece to form your behaviour.

Cler. But to talk with her apart is the great matter.

Pounce. The antiquated virgin has a mighty affectation for youth, and is a great lover of men and money—One of these, at least, I am sure I can gratify her in, by turning her pence in the annuities, or the stocks of one of the companies; some way or other I'll find to entertain her, and engage you with the young lady.

Cler. Since that is her ladyship's turn, so busy and fine a gentleman as Mr. Pounce must needs be in her good graces.

Pounce. So shall you too—but you must not be seen with me at first meeting; I'll dog 'em, while you watch at a distance. [*Exeunt.*

Enter AUNT *and* NIECE.

Niece. Was it not my gallant that whistled so charm-

ingly in the parlour before he went out this morning? He's a most accomplished cavalier.

Aunt. Come, niece, come; you don't do well to make sport with your relations, especially with a young gentleman that has so much kindness for you.

Niece. Kindness for me! What a phrase is there to express the darts and flames, the sighs and languishings, of an expecting lover!

Aunt. Pray, niece, forbear this idle trash, and talk like other people. Your cousin Humphry will be true and hearty in what he says, and that's a great deal better than the talk and compliment of romances.

Niece. Good madam, don't wound my ears with such expressions; do you think I can ever love a man that's true and hearty? What a peasant-like amour do these coarse words import! True and hearty! Pray, aunt, endeavour a little at the embellishment of your style.

Aunt. Alack-a-day, cousin Biddy, these idle romances have quite turned your head.[1]

Niece. How often must I desire you, madam, to lay aside that familiar name, cousin Biddy? I never hear it without blushing—Did you ever meet with a heroine in those idle romances, as you call 'em, that was termed Biddy?

Aunt. Ah! cousin, cousin, these are mere vapours, indeed; nothing but vapours.

Niece. No, the heroine has always something soft and engaging in her name; something that gives us a notion of the sweetness of her beauty and behaviour; a name that glides through half-a-dozen tender syllables, as

[1] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, in a letter dated Feb. 26, 1711, to her future husband, proposing that their engagement should cease, says that she had foolishly despised women who looked for their happiness in trifles, and thought, as Dryden puts it, that true happiness was to be found in privacy and love. "These notions had corrupted my judgment as much as that of Mrs. Biddy Tipkin's."

Elismonda, Clidamira, Deidamia, that runs upon vowels off the tongue; not hissing through one's teeth, or breaking them with consonants. 'Tis strange rudeness those familiar names they give us, when there is Aurelia, Sacharissa, Gloriana, for people of condition; and Celia, Chloris, Corinna, Mopsa, for their maids and those of lower rank.

Aunt. Look ye, Biddy, this is not to be supported. I know not where you learned this nicety; but I can tell you, forsooth, as much as you despise it, your mother was a Bridget afore you, and an excellent house-wife.

Niece. Good madam, don't upbraid me with my mother Bridget, and an excellent house-wife.

Aunt. Yes, I say she was; and spent her time in better learning than you ever did—not in reading of fights and battles of dwarfs and giants, but in writing out receipts for broths, possets, caudles, and surfeit-waters, as became a good country gentlewoman.

Niece. My mother, and a Bridget!

Aunt. Yes, niece, I say again, your mother, my sister, was a Bridget! the daughter of her mother Margery, of her mother Sisly, of her mother Alice.

Niece. Have you no mercy? Oh, the barbarous genealogy!

Aunt. Of her mother Winifred, of her mother Joan.

Niece. Since you will run on, then I must needs tell you I am not satisfied in the point of my nativity. Many an infant has been placed in a cottage with obscure parents, till by chance some ancient servant of the family has known it by its marks.

Aunt. Ay, you had best be searched—That's like your calling the winds the fanning gales, before I don't know how much company; and the tree that was blown by it had, forsooth, a spirit imprisoned in the trunk of it.

Niece. Ignorance!

Aunt. Then a cloud this morning had a flying dragon in it.

Niece. What eyes had you, that you could see nothing? For my part I look upon it to be a prodigy, and expect something extraordinary will happen to me before night. —But you have a gross relish of things. What noble descriptions in romances had been lost, if the writers had been persons of your gout?

Aunt. I wish the authors had been hanged, and their books burnt, before you had seen 'em.

Niece. Simplicity!

Aunt. A parcel of improbable lies.

Niece. Indeed, madam, your raillery is coarse——

Aunt. Fit only to corrupt young girls, and fill their heads with a thousand foolish dreams of I don't know what.

Niece. Nay, now, madam, you grow extravagant.

Aunt. What I say is not to vex, but advise you for your good.

Niece. What, to burn Philocles, Artaxeres, Oroondates, and the rest of the heroic lovers, and take my country booby, cousin Humphry, for a husband!

Aunt. Oh dear, oh dear, Biddy! Pray, good dear, learn to act and speak like the rest of the world; come, come, you shall marry your cousin and live comfortably.

Niece. Live comfortably! What kind of life is that? A great heiress live comfortably! Pray, aunt, learn to raise your ideas—What is, I wonder, to live comfortably?

Aunt. To live comfortably is to live with prudence and frugality, as we do in Lombard Street.

Niece. As we do! That's a fine life, indeed, with one servant of each sex. Let's see how many things our coachman is good for—He rubs down his horses, lays the cloth, whets the knives, and sometimes makes beds.

Aunt. A good servant should turn his hand to everything in a family.

Niece. Nay, there's not a creature in our family that has not two or three different duties. As John is butler, footman, and coachman, so Mary is cook, laundress, and chamber-maid.

Aunt. Well, and do you laugh at that?

Niece. No, not I; nor at the coach-horses, though one has an easy trot for my uncle's riding, and t'other an easy pace for your side-saddle.

Aunt. And so you jeer at the good management of your relations, do you?

Niece. No, I'm well satisfied that all the house are creatures of business; but, indeed, was in hopes that my poor little lap-dog might have lived with me upon my fortune without an employment; but my uncle threatens every day to make him a turn-spit, that he too, in his sphere, may help us to live comfortably.

Aunt. Hark ye, cousin Biddy.

Niece. I vow I'm out of countenance when our butler, with his careful face, drives us all stowed in a chariot drawn by one horse ambling and t'other trotting, with his provisions behind for the family, from Saturday night till Monday morning, bound for Hackney—then we make a comfortable figure, indeed.

Aunt. So we do, and so will you always, if you marry your cousin Humphry.

Niece. Name not the creature.

Aunt. Creature! What, your own cousin a creature!

Niece. Oh, let's be going. I see yonder another creature that does my uncle's law business, and has, I believe, made ready the deeds—those barbarous deeds!

Aunt. What, Mr. Pounce a creature too! Nay, now I'm sure you're ignorant. You shall stay, and you'll learn more wit from him in an hour, than in a thousand of your foolish books in an age—— Your servant, Mr. Pounce.

Enter POUNCE.

Pounce. Ladies, I hope I don't interrupt any private discourse.

Aunt. Not in the least, sir.

Pounce. I should be loth to be esteemed one of those who think they have a privilege of mixing in all companies, without any business but to bring forth a loud laugh or vain jest.

Niece. He talks with the mien and gravity of a Paladin. [*Aside.*

Pounce. Madam, I bought the other day at three and a-half, and sold at seven——

Aunt. Then pray sir, sell for me in time. Niece, mind him; he has an infinite deal of wit.

Pounce. This that I speak of was for you. I never neglect such opportunities to serve my friends.

Aunt. Indeed, Mr. Pounce, you are, I protest without flattery, the wittiest man in the world.

Pounce. I assure you, madam, I said last night, before an hundred head of citizens, that Mrs. Barsheba Tipkin was the most ingenious young lady in the Liberties.

Aunt. Well, Mr. Pounce, you are so facetious—But you are always among the great ones; 'tis no wonder you have it.

Niece. Idle! Idle!

Pounce. But, madam, you know Alderman Grey-Goose, he's a notable joking man. Well, says he, here's Mrs. Barsheba's health; she's my mistress.

Aunt. That man makes me split my sides with laughing, he's such a wag.—Mr. Pounce pretends Grey-Goose said all this, but I know 'tis his own wit, for he's in love with me. [*Aside.*

Pounce. But, madam, there's a certain affair I should communicate to you. [*Apart.*

Aunt. Ay, 'tis certainly so—he wants to break his mind to me. [*Aside.*] [CAPTAIN CLERIMONT *passing.*

Pounce. Oh, Mr. Clerimont, Mr. Clerimont—— Ladies, pray let me introduce this young gentleman; he's my friend, a youth of great virtue and goodness, for all he's in a red coat.

Aunt. If he's your friend we need not doubt his virtue.

Cler. Ladies, you are taking the cool breath of the morning.

Niece. A pretty phrase. [*Aside.*

Aunt. That's the pleasantest time this warm weather.

Cler. Oh, 'tis the season of the pearly dews and gentle zephyrs.

Niece. Ay! pray mind that again, aunt. [*Aside.*

Pounce. Shan't we repose ourselves on yonder seat? I love improving company, and to communicate.

Aunt. 'Tis certainly so. He's in love with me, and wants opportunity to tell me so [*Aside.*]—I don't care if we do—He's a most ingenious man. [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt* AUNT *and* POUNCE.

Cler. We enjoy here, madam, all the pretty landscapes of the country without the pains of going thither.

Niece. Art and nature are in a rivalry, or rather a confederacy, to adorn this beauteous park with all the agreeable variety of water, shade, walks, and air. What can be more charming than these flowery lawns?

Cler. Or these gloomy shades——

Niece. Or these embroidered valleys ——

Cler. Or that transparent stream——

Niece. Or these bowing branches on the banks of it, that seem to admire their own beauty in the crystal mirror?

Cler. I am surprised, madam, at the delicacy of your phrase. Can such expressions come from Lombard Street?

Niece. Alas, sir! what can be expected from an innocent virgin that has been immured almost one-and-twenty years from the conversation of mankind, under the care of an Urganda[1] of an aunt?

[1] Urganda was an enchantress in the Amadis and Palmerin romances.

Cler. Bless me, madam, how have you been abused! Many a lady before your age has had an hundred lances broken in her service, and as many dragons cut to pieces in honour of her.

Nicce. Oh, the charming man! [*Aside.*

Cler. Do you believe Pamela was one-and-twenty before she knew Musidorus?[1]

Niece. I could hear him ever. [*Aside.*

Cler. A lady of your wit and beauty might have given occasion for a whole romance in folio before that age.

Niece. Oh, the powers! Who can he be?—Oh, youth unknown—But let me, in the first place, know whom I talk to, for, sir, I am wholly unacquainted both with your person and your history. You seem, indeed, by your deportment, and the distinguishing mark of your bravery which you bear, to have been in a conflict. May I not know what cruel beauty obliged you to such adventures till she pitied you?

Cler. Oh, the pretty coxcomb! [*Aside.*]—Oh, Blenheim, Blenheim! Oh, Cordelia, Cordelia!

Niece. You mention the place of battle. I would fain hear an exact description of it. Our public papers are so defective; they don't so much as tell us how the sun rose on that glorious day—Were there not a great many flights of vultures before the battle began?

Cler. Oh, madam, they have eaten up half my acquaintance.

Niece. Certainly never birds of prey were so feasted; by report, they might have lived half-a-year on the very legs and arms our troops left behind 'em.

Cler. Had we not fought near a wood we should never have got legs enough to have come home upon. The joiner of the Foot Guards has made his fortune by it.

Niece. I shall never forgive your General. He has put

[1] Musidorus, in Sir P. Sidney's *Arcadia*, is the Prince of Thessaly, and in love with Pamela.

all my ancient heroes out of countenance; he has pulled down Cyrus and Alexander, as much as Louis-le-Grand—But your own part in that action?

Cler. Only that slight hurt, for the astrologer said at my nativity, nor fire, nor sword, nor pike, nor musket shall destroy this child, let him but avoid fair eyes—— But, madam, mayn't I crave the name of her that has so captivated my heart?

Niece. I can't guess whom you mean by that description; but if you ask my name, I must confess you put me upon revealing what I always keep as the greatest secret I have—for would you believe it, they have called me—I don't know how to own it, but they have called me—Bridget.

Cler. Bridget?

Niece. Bridget.

Cler. Bridget?

Niece. Spare my confusion, I beseech you, sir; and if you have occasion to mention me, let it be by Parthenissa,[1] for that's the name I have assumed ever since I came to years of discretion.

Cler. The insupportable tyranny of parents, to fix names on helpless infants which they must blush at all their lives after! I don't think there's a surname in the world to match it.

Niece. No! What do you think of Tipkin?

Cler. Tipkin! Why, I think if I was a young lady that had it I'd part with it immediately.

Niece. Pray, how would you get rid of it?

Cler. I'd change it for another. I could recommend to you three very pretty syllables—What do you think of Clerimont?

Niece. Clerimont! Clerimont! Very well—but what right have I to it?

[1] Parthenissa was the heroine of a romance of that name by Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery, the first two parts of which appeared in 1651.

Cler. If you will give me leave, I'll put you in possession of it. By a very few words I can make it over to you, and your children after you.

Niece. O fie! Whither are you running? You know a lover should sigh in private, and languish whole years before he reveals his passion; he should retire into some solitary grove, and make the woods and wild beasts his confidants. You should have told it to the echo half-a-year before you had discovered it, even to my handmaid. And yet besides—to talk to me of children! Did you ever hear of a heroine with a big belly?

Cler. What can a lover do, madam, now the race of giants is extinct? Had I lived in those days there had not been a mortal six foot high, but should have owned Parthenissa for the paragon of beauty, or measured his length on the ground—— Parthenissa should have been heard by the brooks and deserts at midnight, the echo's burden and the river's murmur.

Niece. That had been a golden age, indeed! But see, my aunt has left her grave companion and is coming toward us—— I command you to leave me.

Cler. Thus Oroondates, when Statira[1] dismissed him her presence, threw himself at her feet, and implored permission but to live. [*Offering to kneel.*

Niece. And thus Statira raised him from the earth, permitting him to live and love. [*Exit* CLER.

Enter AUNT.

Aunt. Is not Mr. Pounce's conversation very improving, niece?

Niece. Is not Clerimont a very pretty name, aunt?

Aunt. He has so much prudence.

Niece. He has so much gallantry.

Aunt. So sententious in his expressions.

[1] Statira, in *Cassandra*, was the widow of Alexander the Great, and the daughter of Darius. She married Oroondates after many difficulties had been overcome.

Niece. So polished in his language.

Aunt. All he says is, methinks, so like a sermon.

Niece. All he speaks savours of romance.

Aunt. Romance, niece? Mr. Pounce! what savours of romance?

Niece. No, I mean his friend, the accomplished Mr. Clerimont.

Aunt. Fie, for one of your years to commend a young fellow!

Niece. One of my years is mightily governed by example! You did not dislike Mr. Pounce.

Aunt. What, censorious too? I find there is no trusting you out of the house—A moment's fresh air does but make you still the more in love with strangers, and despise your own relations.

Niece. I am certainly by the power of an enchantment placed among you, but I hope I, this morning, employed one to seek adventures, and break the charm.

Aunt. Vapours, Biddy, indeed! Nothing but vapours. Cousin Humphry shall break the charm.

Niece. Name him not—Call me still Biddy rather than name that brute. [*Exeunt* AUNT *and* NIECE.

Enter CAPTAIN CLERIMONT *and* POUNCE.

Clr. A perfect Quixote in petticoats! I tell thee, Pounce, she governs herself wholly by romance—it has got into her very blood. She starts by rule, and blushes by example. Could I but have produced one instance of a lady's complying at first sight, I should have gained her promise on the spot. How am I bound to curse the cold constitutions of the Philocleas and Statiras? I am undone for want of precedents.

Pounce. I am sure I laboured hard to favour your conference, and plied the old woman all the while with something that tickled either her vanity or her covetousness; I considered all the stocks, Old and New Company,

her own complexion and youth, partners for sword-blades, Chamber of London, banks for charity, and mine adventures, till she told me I had the repute of the most facetious man that ever came to Garraway's[1]—For you must know public knaves and stock-jobbers pass for wits at her end of the town, as common cheats and gamesters do at yours.

Cler. I pity the drudgery you have gone through; but what's next to be done towards getting my pretty heroine?

Pounce. What should next be done in ordinary method of things? You have seen her; the next regular approach is that you cannot subsist a moment without sending forth musical complaints of your misfortune by way of serenade.

Cler. I can nick you there, sir. I have a scribbling army friend that has writ a triumphant, rare, noisy song in honour of the late victory, that will hit the nymph's fantasque to a hair. I'll get everything ready as fast as possible.

Pounce. While you are playing upon the fort, I'll be within and observe what execution you do, and give you intelligence accordingly.

Cler. You must have an eye upon Mr. Humphry while I feed the vanity of Parthenissa; for I am so experienced in these matters that I know none but coxcombs think to win a woman by any desert of their own—No, it must be done rather by complying with some prevailing humour of your mistress, than exerting any good quality in yourself.

'Tis not the lover's merit wins the field,
But to themselves alone the beauteous yield.

[1] Garraway's coffee house, in Change Alley. Thomas Garraway, tobacconist and coffee-man, was the first to retail tea, which he recommended for the cure of all disorders. See *Tatler*, No. 147; *Spectator*, Nos. 403, 457. Garraway's was the resort of merchants.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—Mrs. Clerimont's *Room.*

Enter Mrs. Clerimont, Fainlove (*carrying her lap-dog*), *and* Jenny.

EN. Madam, the footman that's recommended to you is below, if your ladyship will please to take him.

Mrs. Cler. O fie; don't believe I'll think on't. It is impossible he should be good for anything — The English are so saucy with their liberty—I'll have all my lower servants French. There cannot be a good footman born out of an absolute monarchy.

Jen. I am beholden to your ladyship for believing so well of the maidservants in England.

Mrs. Cler. Indeed, Jenny, I could wish thou wert really French; for thou art plain English in spite of example. Your arms do but hang on, and you move perfectly upon joints; not with a swim of the whole person—But I am talking to you, and have not adjusted myself to-day: What pretty company a glass is, to have another self! [*Kisses the dog.*] To converse in soliloquy! To have company that never contradicts or displeases us! The pretty visible echo of our actions! [*Kisses the dog.*] How easy, too, it is to be disencumbered with stays,

where a woman has anything like shape; if no shape, a good air—But I look best when I'm talking.

[*Kisses the lap-dog in* FAINLOVE'S *arms.*

Jen. You always look well.

Mrs. Cler. For I'm always talking, you mean so; that disquiets thy sullen English temper; but I don't really look so well when I am silent. If I do but offer to speak, then I may say that—Oh, bless me, Jenny, I am so pale, I am afraid of myself—I have not laid on half red enough—What a dough-baked thing was I before I improved myself, and travelled for beauty! However, my face is very prettily designed to-day.

Fain. Indeed, madam, you begin to have so fine an hand, that you are younger every day than other.

Mrs. Cler. The ladies abroad used to call me Mademoiselle Titian, I was so famous for my colouring; but prithee, wench, bring me my black eyebrows out of the next room.[1]

Jen. Madam, I have 'em in my hand.

[1] Prior has several poems on this subject:—

"From her own native France, as old Alison passed,
She reproached English Nell with neglect or with malice,
That the slattern had left in the hurry and haste
Her lady's complexion and eyebrows at Calais."

And, again,

"Helen was just slipped into bed,
Her eyebrows on the toilette lay,
Away the kitten with them fled,
As fees belonging to her prey.
For this misfortune careless Jane,
Assure yourself, was loudly rated,
And madam getting up again,
With her own hand the mouse-trap baited.
On little things as sages write,
Depends our human joy or sorrow;
If we don't catch a mouse to-night,
Alas! no eyebrows for to-morrow."

And on another occasion, when her eyebrow box was lost, Helen says:—

"I can behold no mortal now,
For what's an eye without a brow?"

Fain. It would be happy for all that are to see you to-day, if you could change your eyes, too.

Mrs. Cler. Gallant enough—no, hang it, I'll wear these I have on; this mode of visage takes mightily. I had three ladies last week came over to my complexion. I think to be a fair woman this fortnight, till I find I'm aped too much—I believe there are an hundred copies of me already.

Jen. Dear madam, won't your ladyship please to let me be of the next countenance you leave off?

Mrs. Cler. You may, Jenny; but I assure you it is a very pretty piece of ill-nature, for a woman that has any genius for beauty to observe the servile imitation of her manner, her motion, her glances, and her smiles.

Fain. Ay, indeed, madam, nothing can be so ridiculous as to imitate the inimitable.

Mrs. Cler. Indeed, as you say, Fainlove, the French mien is no more to be learned than the language, without going thither. Then, again, to see some poor ladies who have clownish, penurious, English husbands, turn and torture their old clothes into so many forms, and dye 'em into so many colours, to follow me—What say'st, Jenny? What say'st? Not a word?

Jen. Why, madam, all that I can say——

Mrs. Cler. Nay, I believe, Jenny, thou hast nothing to say any more than the rest of thy country-women. The splenatics speak just as the weather lets 'em; they are mere talking barometers. Abroad the people of quality go on so eternally, and still go on, and are gay and entertain. In England discourse is made up of nothing but question and answer. I was t'other day at a visit, where there was a profound silence, for, I believe, the third part of a minute.

Jen. And your ladyship there?

Mrs. Cler. They infected me with their dulness; who can keep up their good humour at an English visit? They

sit as at a funeral, silent in the midst of many candles. One, perhaps, alarms the room — "'Tis very cold weather"—then all the mutes play their fans till some other question happens, and then the fans go off again.

Boy. Madam, your spinet-master is come.

Mrs. Cler. Bring him in; he's very pretty company.

Fain. His spinet is; he never speaks himself.

Mrs. Cler. Speak, simpleton! What then; he keeps out silence, does not he?—Oh, sir, you must forgive me; I have been very idle. Well, you pardon me. [*Master bows.*] Did you think I was perfect in the song? [*Bows*] — but pray let me hear it once more. Let us see it—— [*Reads.*

SONG.

With studied airs, and practised smiles,
Flavia my ravished heart beguiles;
The charms we make, are ours alone,
Nature's works are not our own;
Her skilful hand gives every grace,
And shows her fancy in her face.
She feeds with art an amourous rage,
Nor fears the force of coming age.

You sing it very well; but, I confess, I wish you'd give more in to the French manner—Observe me hum it à-la-Française.

"With studied airs," &c.

The whole person, every limb, every nerve sings. The English way is only being for that time a mere musical instrument, just sending forth a sound without knowing they do so. Now I'll give you a little of it, like an Englishwoman: You are to suppose I've denied you twenty times, looked silly, and all that—then, with hands and face insensible —I have a mighty cold.

"With studied airs," &c.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Madam, Captain Clerimont and a very strange gentleman are come to wait on you.

Mrs. Cler. Let him and the very strange gentleman come in.

Fain. Oh! madam, that's the country gentleman I was telling you of.

Enter HUMPHRY *and* CAPTAIN CLERIMONT.

Fain. Madam, may I do myself the honour to recommend Mr. Gubbin, son and heir to Sir Harry Gubbin, to your ladyship's notice?

Mrs. Cler. Mr. Gubbin, I am extremely pleased with your suit; 'tis antique, and originally from France.

Hump. It is always locked up, madam, when I'm in the country. My father prizes it mightily.

Mrs. Cler. 'Twould make a very pretty dancing suit in a masque. Oh! Captain Clerimont, I have a quarrel with you.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Madam, your ladyship's husband desires to know whether you see company to-day or not?

Mrs. Cler. Who, you clown?

Ser. Mr. Clerimont, madam.

Mrs. Cler. He may come in.

Enter CLERIMONT, SEN.

Mrs. Cler. Your very humble servant.

Cler. Sen. I am going to take the air this morning in my coach, and did myself the honour, before I went, to receive your commands, finding you saw company.

Mrs. Cler. At any time when you know I do, you may let me see you. Pray, how did you sleep last night? —If I had not asked him that question they might have

thought we lay together. [*Aside. Here* FAINLOVE, *looking through a perspective, bows to* CLERIMONT, SEN.]—But captain, I have a quarrel with you—I have utterly forgot those three coupees[1] you promised to come again and show me.

Cler. Sen. Then, madam, you have no commands this morning?

Mrs. Cler. Your humble servant, sir—But, oh! [*As she is going to be led by the Captain.*] Have you signed that mortgage to pay off my Lady Faddle's winnings at ombre?

Cler. Sen. Yes, madam.

Mrs. Cler. Then all's well; my honour's safe. [*Exit* CLERIMONT, SEN.] Come, captain, lead me this step, for I'm apt to make a false one; you shall show me.

Cler. I'll show you, madam; 'tis no matter for a fiddle; I'll give you 'em the French way, in a teaching tune. Pray, more quick—Oh, mademoiselle, que faites-vous?—A moi—There again—Now slide, as it were, with and without measure—There you outdid the gipsy; and you have all the smiles of the dance to a tittle.

Mrs. Cler. Why, truly, I think that the greatest part. I have seen an English woman dance a jig with the severity of a vestal virgin.

Hump. If this be French dancing and singing, I fancy I could do it. Haw! haw! [*Capers aside.*

Mrs. Cler. I protest, Mr. Gubbin, you have almost the step, without any of our country bashfulness. Give me your hand. Haw! haw! So, so; a little quicker. That's right, haw!—Captain, your brother delivered this spark to me, to be diverted here till he calls for him.

[*Exit* CLERIMONT.

[1] A coupee is a motion in dancing, when one leg is a little bent, and raised from the ground, while a forward motion is made with the other leg.

Hump. This cutting so high makes one's money jingle confoundedly. I'm resolved I'll never carry above one pocketful hereafter.

Mrs. Cler. You do it very readily; you amaze me.

Hump. Are the gentlemen in France generally so well bred as we are in England? Are they, madam, ha?—But, young gentleman, when shall I see this sister? Haw! haw! haw! Is not the higher one jumps the better?

Fain. She'll be mightily taken with you, I'm sure. One would not think 'twas in you—you're so gay, and dance so very high.

Hump. What should ail me? Did you think I was wind-galled? I can sing, too, if I please; but I won't till I see your sister—This is a mighty pretty house.

Mrs. Cler. Well, do you know that I like this gentleman extremely? I should be glad to inform him—But were you never in France, Mr. Gubbin?

Hump. No; but I'm always thus pleasant, if my father's not by.—[*To* FAINLOVE.] I protest I'd advise your sister to have me: I'm for marrying her at once. Why should I stand shilly-shally, like a country bumpkin?

Fain. Mr. Gubbin, I daresay she'll be as forward as you; we'll go in and see her. [*Apart.*

Mrs. Cler. Then he has not yet seen the lady he is in love with! I protest very new and gallant—Mr. Gubbin, she must needs believe you a frank person—Fainlove, I must see this sister, too, I'm resolved she shall like him.

There needs not time true passion to discover;
The most believing is the most a lover.

SCENE II.—NIECE'S *Lodgings.*

Enter NIECE.

Niece. Oh, Clerimont! Clerimont! To be struck at first sight! I'm ashamed of my weakness; I find in myself all the symptoms of a raging amour. I love solitude, I grow pale, I sigh frequently, I call upon the name of Clerimont when I don't think of it—His person is ever in my eyes, and his voice in my ears—Methinks I long to lose myself in some pensive grove, or to hang over the head of some warbling fountain, with a lute in my hand, softening the murmurs of the water.

Enter AUNT.

Aunt. Biddy, Biddy; where's Biddy Tipkin?

Niece. Whom do you inquire for?

Aunt. Come, come; he's just a-coming at the Park door.

Niece. Who is coming?

Aunt. Your cousin Humphry. Who should be coming? Your lover, your husband that is to be—Pray, my dear, look well, and be civil for your credit, and mine too.

Niece. If he answers my idea, I shall rally the rustic to death.

Aunt. Hist—Here he is.

Enter HUMPHRY.

Hump. Aunt, your humble servant. Is that—ha! Aunt?

Aunt. Yes, cousin Humphry, that's your cousin Bridget—Well, I'll leave you together.

[*Exit* AUNT. *They sit.*

Hump. Aunt does as she'd be done by, cousin Bridget, does not she, cousin? Ha! What, are you a Londoner, and not speak to a gentleman? Look ye, cousin, the

old folks resolving to marry us, I thought it would be proper to see how I liked you, as not caring to buy a pig in a poke, for I love to look before I leap.

Niece. Sir, your person and address bring to my mind the whole history of Valentine and Orson.[1] What, would they marry me to a wild man? Pray answer me a question or two.

Hump. Ay, ay; as many as you please, cousin Bridget.

Niece. What wood were you taken in? How long have you been caught?

Hump. Caught!

Niece. Where were your haunts?

Hump. My haunts!

Niece. Are not clothes very uneasy to you? Is this strange dress the first you ever wore?

Hump. How?

Niece. Are you not a great admirer of roots, and raw flesh? Let me look upon your nails—Don't you love blackberries, haws, and pig-nuts, mightily?

Hump. How?

Niece. Can'st thou deny that thou wert suckled by a wolf? You have not been so barbarous, I hope, since you came among men, as to hunt your nurse, have you?

Hump. Hunt my nurse? Ay, 'tis so, she's distracted, as sure as a gun. Hark ye, cousin, pray will you let me ask you a question or two?

Niece. If thou hast yet learned the use of language, speak, monster.

Hump. How long have you been thus?

Niece. Thus! What would'st thou say?

Hump. What's the cause of it? Tell me truly, now; did you never love anybody before me?

[1] Valentine and Orson, the two twin sons of Alexander, Emperor of Constantinople, in the old romance, were born in a wood.

Niece. Go, go, thou'rt a savage. [*Rises.*

Hump. They never let you go abroad, I suppose.

Niece. Thou'rt a monster, I tell thee.

Hump. Indeed, cousin, though 'tis a folly to tell thee so—I am afraid thou art a mad woman.

Niece. I'll have thee carried into some forest.

Hump. I'll take thee into a dark room.

Niece. I hate thee.

Hump. I wish you did—There's no hate lost, I assure you, cousin Bridget.

Niece. Cousin Bridget, quoth'a! I'd as soon claim kindred with a mountain bear—I detest thee.

Hump. You never do any harm in these fits, I hope. —But do you hate me in earnest?

Niece. Dost thou ask it, ungentle forester?

Hump. Yes; for I've a reason, look ye. It happens very well if you hate me and are in your senses, for, to tell you truly, I don't much care for you; and there is another fine woman, as I am informed, that is in some hopes of having me.

Niece. This merits my attention. [*Aside.*

Hump. Look ye, d'ye see—as I said, since I don't care for you, I would not have you set your heart on me; but if you like anybody else let me know it, and I'll find out a way for us to get rid of one another, and deceive the old folks that would couple us.

Niece. This wears the face of an amour.—There is something in that thought which makes thy presence less insupportable.

Hump. Nay, nay, now you're growing fond; if you come with these maid's tricks, to say you hate at first and afterwards like me, you'll spoil the whole design.

Niece. Don't fear it—When I think of consorting with thee, may the wild boar defile the cleanly ermine; may the tiger be wedded to the kid.

Hump. When I of thee, may the pole-cat caterwaul with the civet.

Niece. When I harbour the least thought of thee, may the silver Thames forget its course.

Hump. When I like thee, may I be soused over head and ears in a horsepond—But do you hate me?

Enter AUNT.

Niece. For ever; and you me?

Hump. Most heartily.

Aunt. Ha! I like this. They are come to promises and protestations. [*Aside.*

Hump. I am very glad I have found a way to please you.

Niece. You promise to be constant?

Hump. Till death.

Niece. Thou best of savages!

Hump. Thou best of savages! Poor Biddy.

Aunt. Oh! the pretty couple, joking on one another—Well, how do you like your cousin Humphry now?

Niece. Much better than I thought I should. He's quite another thing than what I took him for—We have both the same passion for one another.

Hump. We wanted only an occasion to open our hearts, aunt.

Aunt. Oh, how this will rejoice my brother and Sir Harry! we'll go to 'em.

Hump. No, I must fetch a walk with a new acquaintance, Mr. Samuel Pounce.

Aunt. An excellent acquaintance for your husband; come, niece, come.

Niece. Farewell, rustic.

Hump. Bye, Biddy.

Aunt. Rustic! Biddy! Ha! ha! pretty creatures. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE.—*A Street.*

Enter CAPTAIN CLERIMONT *and* POUNCE.

CLER. Does she expect me then, at this very instant?

Pounce. I tell you, she ordered me to bring the painter at this very hour, precisely, to draw her niece; for, to make her picture peculiarly charming, she has now that downcast pretty shame, that warm cheek, glowing with the fear and hope of to-day's fate, with the inviting, coy affection of a bride, all in her face at once. Now I know you are a pretender that way.

Cler. Enough, I warrant, to personate the character on such an inspiring occasion.

Pounce. You must have the song I spoke of performed at this window, at the end of which I'll give you a signal. Everything is ready for you; your pencil, your canvas stretched, your—— Be sure you play your part in humour. To be a painter for a lady, you're to have the excessive flattery of a lover, the ready invention of a poet, and the easy gesture of a player.

Cler. Come, come, no more instructions, my imagination out-runs all you can say. Be gone, be gone!

[*Exit* POUNCE.

A Song.

I.

Why, lovely charmer, tell me why,
So very kind, and yet so shy?
Why does that cold forbidding air
Give damps of sorrow and despair?
Or why that smile my soul subdue,
And kindle up my flames anew?

II.

In vain you strive with all your art,
By turns to freeze and fire my heart:
When I behold a face so fair,
So sweet a look, so soft an air,
My ravished soul is charmed all o'er,
I cannot love thee less nor more.

[*After the song* POUNCE *appears beckoning the* CAPTAIN.]

Pounce. Captain, captain. [*Exit* CAPTAIN.

SCENE II.—NIECE'S *Lodgings; two chairs and a table.*

Enter AUNT *and* NIECE.

Aunt. Indeed, niece, I am as much overjoyed to see your wedding day as if it were my own.

Niece. But why must it be huddled up so?

Aunt. Oh, my dear, a private wedding is much better; your mother had such a bustle at hers, with feasting and fooling. Besides, they did not go to bed till two in the morning.

Niece. Since you understand things so well, I wonder you never married yourself.

Aunt. My dear, I was very cruel thirty years ago, and nobody has asked me since.

Niece. Alas-a-day!

Aunt. Yet, I assure you, there was a great many matches proposed to me: There was Sir Gilbert Jolly, but he, forsooth, could not please; he drank ale and smoked tobacco, and was no fine gentleman, forsooth—But then, again, there was young Mr. Peregrine Shapely, who had travelled, and spoke French, and smiled at all I said; he was a fine gentleman—but then he was consumptive. And yet again, to see how one may be mistaken; Sir Jolly died in half-a-year, and my Lady Shapely has by that thin slip eight children, that should have been mine—but here's the bridegroom.—So, cousin Humphry!

Enter HUMPHRY.

Hump. Your servant, ladies. So, my dear——

Niece. So, my savage—

Aunt. O fie, no more of that to your husband, Biddy.

Hump. No matter, I like it as well as duck or love; I know my cousin loves me as well as I do her.

Aunt. I'll leave you together; I must go and get ready an entertainment for you when you come home. [*Exit.*

Hump. Well, cousin, are you constant? Do you hate me still?

Niece. As much as ever.

Hump. What an happiness it is, when peoples' inclinations jump! I wish I knew what to do with you. Can you get nobody, d'ye think, to marry you?

Niece. Oh! Clerimont, Clerimont! Where art thou? [*Aside.*

Enter AUNT *and* CAPTAIN CLERIMONT, *disguised.*

Aunt. This, sir, is the lady whom you are to draw. You see, sir, as good flesh and blood as a man would desire to put in colours—I must have her maiden picture.

Hump. Then the painter must make haste. Ha, cousin!

Niece. Hold thy tongue, good savage.

Cler. Madam, I'm generally forced to new-mould every feature, and mend nature's handiwork; but here she has made so finished an original, that I despair of my copies coming up to it.

Aunt. Do you hear that, niece?

Niece. I don't desire you to make graces where you find none.

Cler. To see the difference of the fair sex! I protest to you, madam, my fancy is utterly exhausted with inventing faces for those that sit to me. The first entertainment I generally meet with, are complaints for want of sleep; they never looked so pale in their lives, as when they sit for their pictures. Then so many touches and retouches, when the face is finished. That wrinkle ought not to have been, those eyes are too languid, that colour's too weak, that side-look hides the mole on the left cheek. In short, the whole likeness is struck out—But in you, madam, the highest I can come up to will be but rigid justice.

Hump. A comical dog this!

Aunt. Truly, the gentleman seems to understand his business.

Niece. Sir,[1] if your pencil flatters like your tongue, you are going to draw a picture that won't be at all like me—Sure I have heard that voice somewhere. [*Aside.*

Cler. Madam, be pleased to place yourself near me; nearer still, madam, here falls the best light. You must know, madam, there are three kinds of airs which the ladies most delight in: There is your haughty, your mild, and your pensive air. The haughty may be ex-

[1] Cf. Molière's *Le Sicilien*, scene xiii.:—"Si votre pinceau flatte autant que votre langue, vous allez me faire un portrait qui ne me resemblera point."

pressed with the head a little more erect than ordinary, and the countenance with a certain disdain in it, so as she may appear almost, but not quite, inexorable. This kind of air is generally heightened with a little knitting of the brows—I gave my lady Scornwell the choice of a dozen frowns before she could find one to her liking.

Niece. But what's the mild air?

Cler. The mild air is composed of a languish, and a smile—But, if I might advise, I'd rather be a pensive beauty; the pensive usually feels her pulse, leans on one arm, or sits ruminating with a book in her hand; which conversation she is supposed to choose rather than the endless importunities of lovers.

Hump. A comical dog!

Aunt. Upon my word he understands his business well; I'll tell you, niece, how your mother was drawn: she had an orange in her hand,[1] and a nosegay in her bosom, but a look so pure and fresh-coloured you'd have taken her for one of the Seasons.

Cler. You seem indeed, madam, most inclined to the pensive. The pensive delights also in the fall of waters, pastoral figures, or any rural view suitable to a fair lady who, with a delicate spleen, has retired from the world, as sick of its flattery and admiration.

Niece. No; since there is room for fancy in a picture, I would be drawn like the amazon Thalestris, with a spear in my hand, and an helmet on a table before me. At a distance behind let there be a dwarf, holding by the bridle a milk-white palfrey.

[1] See the *Vicar of Wakefield*, Chap. XVI.:—"As for our neighbour's family, there were seven of them, and they were drawn with seven oranges, a thing quite out of taste, no variety in life, no composition in the world." The vicar's wife was painted as Venus, with two Cupids; the vicar, in gown and band, presenting her with his books on the Whistonian controversy. Olivia was an amazon, Sophia a shepherdess, "with as many sheep as the painter could put in for nothing."

Cler. Madam, the thought is full of spirit, and if you please, there shall be a Cupid stealing away your helmet, to show that love should have a part in all gallant actions.

Niece. That circumstance may be very picturesque.

Cler. Here, madam, shall be your own picture, here the palfrey, and here the dwarf—The dwarf must be very little, or we shan't have room for him.

Niece. A dwarf cannot be too little.

Cler. I'll make him a blackamoor to distinguish him from the other too powerful dwarf [*Sighs*]—the Cupid—I'll place that beauteous boy near you, 'twill look very natural—He'll certainly take you for his mother Venus.

Niece. I leave these particulars to your own fancy.

Cler. [1]Please, madam, to uncover your neck a little; a little lower still—a little, little lower.

Niece. I'll be drawn thus, if you please, sir.

Cler. Ladies, have you heard the news of a late marriage between a young lady of great fortune and a younger brother of a good family?

Aunt. Pray, sir, how is it?

Cler. This young gentleman, ladies, is a particular acquaintance of mine, and much about my age and stature (look me full in the face, madam); he accidentally met the young lady, who had in her all the perfections of her sex (hold up your head, madam, that's right); she let him know that his person and discourse were not altogether disagreeable to her. The difficulty was how to gain a second interview (your eyes full upon mine, madam); for never was there such a sigher in

[1] Compare *Le Sicilien*, scene xiii.:—"*Adraste.* Levez-vous un peu, s'il vous plaît. Un peu plus de la côté-là. Le corps tourné ainsi. La tête un peu levée, afin que la beauté du cou paraisse. Ceci un peu plus découvert. (Il découvre un peu plus sa gorge). Bon. Là, un peu davantage; encore tant soit peu. . . . Vos yeux toujours tournés vers moi, je vous en prie; vos regards attachés aux miens."

all the valleys of Arcadia as that unfortunate youth, during the absence of her he loved.

Aunt. Alack-a-day! poor young gentleman!

Niece. It must be he—what a charming amour is this! [*Aside.*

Cler. At length, ladies, he bethought himself of an expedient; he dressed himself just as I am now, and came to draw her picture (your eyes full upon mine, pray, madam).

Hump. A subtle dog, I warrant him.

Cler. And by that means found an opportunity of carrying her off, and marrying her.

Aunt. Indeed, your friend was a very vicious young man.

Niece. Yet perhaps the young lady was not displeased at what he had done.

Cler. But, madam, what were the transports of the lover when she made him that confession?

Niece. I daresay she thought herself very happy when she got out of her guardian's hands.

Aunt. 'Tis very true, niece; there are abundance of those headstrong young baggages about town.

Cler. The gentleman has often told me, he was strangely struck at first sight, but when she sat to him for her picture, and assumed all those graces that are proper for the occasion, his torment was so exquisite, his passion so violent, that he could not have lived a day, had he not found means to make the charmer of his heart his own.

Hump. 'Tis certainly the foolishest thing in the world to stand shilly-shally about a woman, when one has a mind to marry her.

Cler. The young painter turned poet on the subject; I believe I have the words by heart.

Niece. A sonnet! pray repeat it.[1]

[1] This song was set to music by Daniel Purcell.

I.

While gentle Parthenissa walks,
And sweetly smiles, and gaily talks,
A thousand shafts around her fly,
A thousand swains unheeded die.

II.

If then she labours to be seen,
With all her killing air and mien;
From so much beauty, so much art,
What mortal can secure his heart?

Hump. I fancy if 'twas sung, 'twould make a very pretty catch.

Cler. My servant has a voice; you shall hear it.

[*Here it is sung.*

Aunt. Why this is pretty! I think a painter should never be without a good singer, it brightens the features strangely—I profess I'm mightily pleased. I'll but just step in, and give some orders, and be with you presently.

[*Exit.*

Niece. Was not this adventurous painter called Clerimont?

Cler. It was Clerimont, the servant of Parthenissa; but let me beseech that beauteous maid to resolve, and make the incident I feigned to her a real one. Consider, madam, you are environed by cruel and treacherous guards, which would force you to a disagreeable marriage; your case is exactly the same with the princess of the Leontines in *Clelia.*

Niece. How can we commit such a solecism against all rules? What, in the first leaf of our history to have the marriage? You know it cannot be.

Cler. The pleasantest part of the history will be after marriage.

Niece. No! I never yet read of a knight that entered

tilt or tournament after wedlock; 'tis not to be expected: when the husband begins, the hero ends; all that noble impulse to glory, all the generous passion for adventures, is consumed in the nuptial torch; I don't know how it is, but Mars and Hymen never hit it.

Hump. [*Listening.*] Consumed in the nuptial torch! Mars and Hymen! What can all this mean? I am very glad I can hardly read. They could never get these foolish fancies into my head, I had always a strong brain [*Aside.*]—Hark ye, cousin, is not this painter a comical dog?

Niece. I think he's very agreeable company.

Hump. Why then I tell you what: marry him—a painter's a very genteel calling. He's an ingenious fellow, and certainly poor. I fancy he'd be glad on't; I'll keep my aunt out of the room a minute or two, that's all the time you have to consider. [*Exit.*

Cler. Fortune points out to us this only occasion of our happiness: Love's of celestial origin, and needs no long acquaintance to be manifest. Lovers, like angels, speak by intuition; their souls are in their eyes.

Niece. Then I fear he sees mine. [*Aside.*]—But I can't think of abridging our amours, and cutting off all farther decoration of disguise, serenade, and adventure.

Cler. Nor would I willingly lose the merit of long services, midnight sighs, and plaintive solitudes, were there not a necessity.

Niece. Then to be seized by stealth!

Cler. Why, madam, you are a great fortune, and should not be married the common way. Indeed, madam, you ought to be stolen, nay, in strictness, I don't know but you ought to be ravished.

Niece. But then our history will be so short.

Cler. I grant it; but you don't consider there's a device in another's leading you instead of this person that's to have you; and, madam, though our amours can't furnish

out a romance, they'll make a very pretty novel—Why smiles my fair?

Niece. I am almost of opinion that had Oroondates been as pressing as Clerimont, Cassandra had been but a pocket-book[1]; but it looks so ordinary, to go out at a door to be married. Indeed, I ought to be taken out of a window, and run away with.

Enter HUMPHRY *and* POUNCE.

Hump. Well, cousin, the coach is at the door. If you please I'll lead you.

Niece. I put myself into your hands, good savage; but you promise to leave me.

Hump. I tell you plainly, you must not think of having me.

Pounce. [*To* CLER.] You'll have opportunity enough to carry her off; the old fellows will be busy with me. I'll gain all the time I can, but be bold and prosper.

Niece. Clerimont, you follow us.

Cler. Upon the wings of love.

[1] Cf. Molière's *Précieuses Ridicules*, in which Mademoiselle Magdalen says, "Si d'abord Cyrus épousait Mandane, et qu'Aronce de plain-pied fût marié à Clélie!"

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—CLERIMONT, SEN.'S *House.*

Enter CLERIMONT, SEN. *and* FAINLOVE.

CLER. SEN. Then she gave you this letter, and bid you read it as a paper of verses?

Fain. This is the place, the hour, the lucky minute. Now am I rubbing up my memory, to recollect all you said to me when you first ruined me, that I may attack her right.

Cler. Sen. Your eloquence would be needless; 'tis so unmodish to need persuasion: Modesty makes a lady embarrassed; but my spouse is above that, as for example [*Reading her letter*]—"Fainlove, you don't seem to want wit; therefore I need say no more than that distance to a woman of the world is becoming in no man but a husband: an hour hence come up the back stairs to my closet. "Adieu, Mon Mignon."

I am glad you are punctual; I'll conceal myself to observe your interview.—O torture! but this wench must not see it. [*Aside.*

Fain. Be sure you come time enough to save my reputation.

Cler. Sen. Remember your orders, "distance becomes no man but a husband."

Fain. I am glad you are in so good humour on the occasion; but you know me to be but a bully in love, that can bluster only till the minute of engagement—but. I'll top my part, and form my conduct by my own sentiments. If she grows coy, I'll grow more saucy—'twas so I was won myself.

Cler. Sen. Well, my dear rival, your assignation draws nigh; you are to put on your transport, your impatient throbbing heart won't let you wait her arrival. Let the dull family-thing and husband, who reckons his moments by his cares, be content to wait; but you are a gallant, and measure time by ecstasies.

Fain. I hear her coming—To your post—good husband, know your duty, and don't be in the way when your wife has a mind to be in private—To your post, into the coal-hole.

Enter MRS. CLERIMONT.

Welcome, my dear, my tender charmer, oh! to my longing arms—feel the heart pant, that falls and rises as you smile or frown. Oh, the ecstatic moment!—I think that was something like what has been said to me.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Cler. Very well, Fainlove.—I protest I value myself for my discerning. I knew you had fire through all the respect you showed me; but how came you to make no direct advances, young gentleman? Why was I forced to admonish your gallantry?

Fain. Why, madam, I knew you a woman of breeding, and above the senseless niceties of an English wife. The French way is, you are to go so far, whether you are agreeable or not. If you are so happy as to please, nobody that is not of a constrained behaviour is at a loss to let you know it—Besides, if the humble servant makes

the first approaches, he has the impudence of making a request, but not the honour of obeying a command.

Mrs. Cler. Right; a woman's man should conceal passion in a familiar air of indifference. Now there's Mr. Clerimont; I can't allow him the least freedom, but the unfashionable fool grows so fond of me he cannot hide it in public.

Fain. Ay, madam, I have often wondered at your ladyship's choice of one that seems to have so little of the beau monde in his carriage, but just what you force him to, while there were so many pretty gentlemen——

[*Dancing.*

Mrs. Cler. Oh, young gentleman, you are mightily mistaken, if you think such animals as you, and pretty Beau Titmouse, and pert Billy Butterfly, though I suffer you to come in, and play about my rooms, are any ways in competition with a man whose name one would wear.

Fain. O madam! then I find we are——

Mrs. Cler. A woman of sense must have respect for a man of that character; but alas! respect—what is respect? Respect is not the thing. Respect has something too solemn for soft moments—you things are more proper for hours of dalliance.

Cler. Sen. [*Peeping.*] How have I wronged this fine lady! I find I am to be a cuckold out of her pure esteem for me.

Mrs. Cler. Besides, those fellows for whom we have respect have none for us. I warrant on such an occasion Clerimont would have ruffled a woman out of all form, while you——

Cler. Sen. A good hint—now my cause comes on.

[*Aside.*

Fain. Since then you allow us fitter for soft moments, why do we misemploy 'em? Let me kiss that beauteous hand and clasp that graceful frame.

Mrs. Cler. How, Fainlove! What, you don't design

to be impertinent—But my lips have a certain roughness on 'em to-day, han't they?

Fain. [*Kissing.*] No, they are all softness; their delicious sweetness is inexpressible. Here language fails; let me applaud thy lips, not by the utterance, but by the touch of mine.

Enter CLERIMONT, SEN., *drawing his sword.*

Cler. Sen. Ha, villain! Ravisher! Invader of my bed and honour! draw.

Mrs. Cler. What means this insolence—this intrusion into my privacy? What, do you come into my very closet without knocking? Who put this into your head?

Cler. Sen. My injuries have alarmed me, and I'll bear no longer, but sacrifice your bravado, the author of 'em.

Mrs. Cler. Oh! poor Mr. Fainlove! Must he die for his complaisance and innocent freedoms with me? How could you, if you might? Oh! the sweet youth! What, fight Mr. Fainlove? What will the ladies say?

Fain. Let me come at the intruder on ladies' private hours. The unfashionable monster! I'll prevent all future interruption from him—Let me come.

[*Drawing his sword.*

Mrs. Cler. Oh the brave pretty creature! Look at his youth and innocence—he is not made for such rough encounters. Stand behind me—Poor Fainlove!—There is not a visit in town, sir, where you shall not be displayed at full length for this intrusion. I banish you for ever from my sight and bed.

Cler. Sen. I obey you, madam, for distance is becoming in no man but a husband [*Giving her the letter, which she reads, and falls into a swoon.*]—I've gone too far—[*Kissing her.*]—The impertinent was guilty of nothing but what my indiscretion led her to. This is the first kiss I've had these six weeks—but she awakes. Well,

Jenny, you topped your part, indeed. Come to my arms, thou ready, willing, fair one. Thou hast no vanities, no niceties; but art thankful for every instant of love that I bestow on thee. [*Embracing her.*

Mrs. Cler. What, am I then abused? Is it a wench then of his? Oh me! Was ever poor abused wife, poor innocent lady, thus injured!

[*Runs and seizes* FAINLOVE'S *sword.*

Cler. Sen. Oh the brave pretty creature! Hurt Mr. Fainlove! Look at his youth, his innocence—Ha! ha! [*Interposing.*

Fain. Have a care, have a care, dear sir—I know by myself she'll have no mercy.

Mrs. Cler. I'll be the death of her; let me come on. Stand from between us, Mr. Clerimont—I would not hurt you. [*Pushing and crying.*

Cler. Sen. Run, run, Jenny. [*Exit* JENNY.] [*Looks at her upbraidingly before he speaks.*] Well, madam, are these the innocent freedoms you claimed of me? Have I deserved this? How has there been a moment of yours ever interrupted with the real pangs I suffer? The daily importunities of creditors, who became so by serving your profuse vanities: did I ever murmur at supplying any of your diversions, while I believed 'em (as you call 'em) harmless? Must, then, those eyes that used to glad my heart with their familiar brightness hang down with guilt? Guilt has transformed thy whole person; nay, the very memory of it——Fly from my growing passion!

Mrs. Cler. I cannot fly, nor bear it. Oh! look not——

Cler. Sen. What can you say? Speak quickly.

[*Offering to draw.*

Mrs. Cler. I never saw you moved before. Don't murder me impenitent; I'm wholly in your power as a criminal, but remember I have been so in a tender regard.

Cler. Sen. But how have you considered that regard?

Mrs. Cler. Is it possible you can forgive what you ensnared me into? Oh, look at me kindly! You know I have only erred in my intention, nor saw my danger, till, by this honest art, you had shown me what 'tis to venture to the utmost limit of what is lawful. You laid that train, I'm sure, to alarm, not to betray, my innocence. Mr. Clerimont, scorn such baseness! Therefore I kneel—I weep—I am convinced. [*Kneels.*

[*Takes her up, embracing her.*

Cler. Sen. Then kneel, and weep no more, my fairest—my reconciled! Be so in a moment, for know I cannot (without wringing my own heart) give you the least compunction. Be in humour. It shall be your own fault if ever there's a serious word more on this subject.

Mrs. Cler. I must correct every idea that rises in my mind, and learn every gesture of my body anew—I detest the thing I was.

Cler. Sen. No, no; you must not do so. Our joy and grief, honour and reproach, are the same; you must slide out of your foppery by degrees, so that it may appear your own act.

Mrs. Cler. But this wench!

Cler. Sen. She is already out of your way; you shall see the catastrophe of her fate yourself. But still keep up the fine lady till we go out of town; you may return to it with as decent airs as you please.—And now I have shown you your error, I'm in so good humour as to repeat you a couplet on the occasion—

> They only who gain minds, true laurels wear:
> 'Tis less to conquer, than convince, the fair.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—TIPKIN'S *House.*

Enter POUNCE *with papers; a table, chairs, pen, ink, and paper.*

Pounce. 'Tis a delight to gall these old rascals, and set 'em at variance about stakes, which I know neither of 'em will ever have possession of.

Enter TIPKIN *and* SIR HARRY.

Tip. Do you design, Sir Harry, that they shall have an estate in their own hands, and keep house themselves, poor things?

Sir Har. No, no, sir, I know better; they shall go down into the country, and live with me, not touch a farthing of money; but, having all things necessary provided, they shall go tame about the house, and breed.

Tip. Well, Sir Harry, then considering that all human things are subject to change, it behoves every man that has a just sense of mortality to take care of his money.

Sir Har. I don't know what you mean, brother. What do you drive at, brother?

Tip. This instrument is executed by you, your son, and my niece, which discharges me of all retrospects.

Sir Har. It is confessed, brother; but what then?

Tip. All that remains is, that you pay me for the young lady's twelve years' board, as also all other charges, as wearing-apparel, &c.

Sir Har. What is this you say? Did I give you my discharge from all retrospects, as you call it? and after all do you come with this and t'other, and all that? I find you are—I tell you, sir, to your face—I find you are——

Tip. I find too what you are, Sir Harry.

Sir Har. What am I, sir? What am I?

Tip. Why, sir, you are angry.

Sir Har. Sir, I scorn your words; I am not angry. Mr. Pounce is my witness; I am as gentle as a lamb. Would it not make any flesh alive angry, to see a close hunks come after all with a demand of——

Tip. Mr. Pounce, pray inform Sir Harry in this point.

Pounce. Indeed, Sir Harry, I must tell you plainly, that Mr. Tipkin, in this, demands nothing but what he may recover. For though this case may be considered *multifariam*—that is to say, as 'tis usually, commonly, *vicatim*, or vulgarly expressed—yet, I say, when we only observe that the power is settled as the law requires, *assensu patris*, by the consent of the father, that circumstance imports you are well acquainted with the advantages which accrue to your family by this alliance, which corroborates Mr. Tipkin's demand, and avoids all objections that can be made.

Sir Har. Why then, I find you are his adviser in all this.

Pounce. Look ye, Sir Harry, to show you I love to promote among my clients a good understanding; though Mr. Tipkin may claim four thousand pounds, I'll engage for him, and I know him so well, that he shall take three thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight pounds, four shillings and eightpence farthing.

Tip. Indeed, Mr. Pounce, you are too hard upon me.

Pounce. You must consider a little, Sir Harry is your brother.

Sir Har. Three thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight pounds, four shillings and eightpence farthing! For what, I say? For what, sir?

Pounce. For what, sir! for what she wanted, sir; a fine lady is always in want, sir—her very clothes would come to that money in half the time.

Sir Har. Three thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight pounds, four shillings and eightpence farthing for

clothes! Pray how many suits does she wear out in a year?

Pounce. Oh! dear sir, a fine lady's clothes are not old by being worn, but by being seen.

Sir Har. Well, I'll save her clothes for the future, after I have got her into the country. I'll warrant her she shall not appear more in this wicked town, where clothes are worn out by sight—And as to what you demand, I tell you, sir, 'tis extortion.

Tip. Sir Harry, do you accuse me of extortion?

Sir Har. Yes, I say extortion.

Tip. Mr. Pounce, write down that; there are very good laws provided against scandal and calumny—Loss of reputation may tend to loss of money.

Pounce. Item, "for having accused Mr. Tipkin of extortion."

Sir Har. Nay, if you come to your items—look ye, Mr. Tipkin, this is an inventory of such goods as were left to my niece, Bridget, by her deceased father, and which I expect shall be forthcoming at her marriage to my son: Imprimis, "a golden locket of her mother's, with something very ingenious in Latin on the inside of it"; item, "a couple of muskets, with two shoulder-belts and bandoleers"; item, "a large silver caudle-cup, with a true story engraven on it."

Pounce. But, Sir Harry——

Sir Har. Item, "a base viol, with almost all the strings to it, and only a small hole on the back."

Pounce. But nevertheless, sir——

Sir Har. This is the furniture of my brother's bedchamber that follows:—"A suite of tapestry hangings, with the story of Judith and Holofernes, torn only where the head should have been off; an old bedstead, curiously wrought about the posts, consisting of two load of timber; a hone, a basin, three razors, and a comb-case"—Look ye, sir, you see I can item it.

Pounce. Alas, Sir Harry, if you had ten quire of items, 'tis all answered in the word retrospect.

Sir Har. Why then, Mr. Pounce and Mr. Tipkin, you are both rascals.

Tip. Do you call me rascal, Sir Harry?

Sir Har. Yes, sir.

Tip. Write it down, Mr. Pounce, at the end of the leaf.

Sir Har. If you have room, Mr. Pounce, put down "villain, son of a whore, curmudgeon, hunks, and scoundrel."

Tip. Not so fast, Sir Harry, he cannot write so fast; you are at the word "villain"; "son of a whore," I take it, was next—You may make the account as large as you please, Sir Harry.

Sir Har. Come, come, I won't be used thus. Hark ye, sirrah, draw—what do you do at this end of the town without a sword? Draw, I say—

Tip. Sir Harry, you are a military man, a colonel of the Militia.

Sir Har. I am so, sirrah, and will run such an extorting dog as you through the guts, to show the Militia is useful.

Pounce. O dear, O dear! How am I concerned to see persons of your figure thus moved—The wedding is coming in, we'll settle these things afterwards.

Tip. I am calm.

Sir Har. Tipkin, live these two hours, but expect—

Enter HUMPHRY, *leading* NIECE; MRS. CLERIMONT, *led by* FAINLOVE; CAPTAIN CLERIMONT *and* CLERIMONT, SEN.

Pounce. Who are these? Hey-day, who are these, Sir Harry? Ha!

Sir Har. Some frolic, 'tis wedding-day; no matter.

Hump. Haw! haw! father, master uncle, come, you must stir your stumps, you must dance—Come, old lads, kiss the ladies.

Mrs. Cler. Mr. Tipkin, Sir Harry, I beg pardon for an introduction so malapropos; I know sudden familiarity is not the English way. Alas, Mr. Gubbin, this father and uncle of yours must be new modelled; how they stare, both of them!

Sir Har. Hark ye, Numps, who is this you have brought hither? is it not the famous fine lady, Mrs. Clerimont? What a pox did you let her come near your wife?

Hump. Look ye, don't expose yourself, and play some mad country prank to disgrace me before her; I shall be laughed at, because she knows I understand better.

Mrs. Cler. I congratulate, madam, your coming out of the bondage of a virgin state. A woman can't do what she will properly till she's married.

Sir Har. Did you hear what she said to your wife?

Enter AUNT, *before a service of Dishes.*

Aunt. So, Mr. Bridegroom, pray take that napkin, and serve your spouse to-day, according to custom.

Hump. Mrs. Clerimont, pray know my aunt.

Mrs. Cler. Madam, I must beg your pardon; I can't possibly like all that vast load of meat that you are sending in to table, besides, 'tis so offensively sweet, it wants that haut-gout we are so delighted with in France.[1]

Aunt. You'll pardon it, since we did not expect you—Who is this? [*Aside.*

Mrs. Cler. Oh, madam, I only speak for the future; little saucers are so much more polite. Look ye, I'm perfectly for the French way; where'er I'm admitted, I take the whole upon me.

Sir Har. The French, madam, I'd have you to know——

[1] Similarly, Beau Tibbs hated "immense loads of meat"—"extreme disgusting to those who are in the least acquainted with high life."

Mrs. Cler. You'll not like it at first, out of a natural English sullenness, but that will come upon you by degrees. When I first went into France I was mortally afraid of a frog, but in a little time I could eat nothing else, except salads.

Aunt. Eat frogs! have I kissed one that has ate frogs? Paw! paw!

Mrs. Cler. Oh, madam, a frog and a salad are delicious fare; 'tis not long come up in France itself, but their glorious monarch has introduced the diet which makes 'em so spiritual. He eradicated all gross food by taxes, and, for the glory of the monarch, sent the subject a-grazing—but I fear I defer the entertainment and diversion of the day.

Hump. Now father, uncle, before we go any further, I think 'tis necessary we know who and who's together; then I give either of you two hours to guess which is my wife—and 'tis not my cousin; so far I'll tell you.

Sir Har. How! What do you say? But oh! you mean she is not your cousin now, she's nearer akin; that's well enough. Well said, Numps; ha! ha! ha!

Hump. No, I don't mean so; I tell you I don't mean so—My wife hides her face under her hat.

[*All looking at* FAINLOVE.

Tip. What does the puppy mean? His wife under a hat!

Hump. Ay, ay, that's she, that's she—A good jest, 'faith!

Sir Har. Hark ye, Numps, what dost mean, child? Is that a woman, and are you really married to her?

Hump. I am sure of both.

Sir Har. Are you so, sirrah? then, sirrah, this is your wedding dinner, sirrah—Do you see, sirrah, here's roast meat.

Hump. Oh, oh! what, beat a married man! Hold

him, Mr. Clerimont, Brother Pounce, Mr. Wife; nobody stand by a young married man!

[*Runs behind* FAINLOVE.

Sir Har. Did not the dog say Brother Pounce? what, is this Mrs. Ragout? this Madam Clerimont? Who the devil are you all? but especially who the devil are you two?

[*Beats* HUMPHRY *and* FAINLOVE *off the Stage, following.*

Tip. [*To Pounce.*] Master Pounce, all my niece's fortune will be demanded now—for I suppose that red coat has her. Don't you think you and I had better break?

Pounce. [*To Tipkin.*] You may as soon as you please, but 'tis my interest to be honest a little longer.

Tip. Well, Biddy, since you would not accept of your cousin, I hope you han't disposed of yourself elsewhere.

Niece. If you'll for a little while suspend your curiosity, you shall have the whole history of my amour to this my nuptial day, under the title of the loves of Clerimont and Parthenissa.

Tip. Then, madam, your portion is in safe hands.

Cler. Come, come, old gentleman, 'tis in vain to contend; here's honest Mr. Pounce shall be my engineer, and I warrant you we beat you out of all your holds.

Aunt. What then, is Mr. Pounce a rogue?—He must have some trick, brother, it cannot be; he must have cheated t'other side, for I'm sure he's honest.

[*Apart to* TIPKIN.

Cler. Sen. Mr. Pounce, all your sister has won of this lady she has honestly put into my hands; and I'll return it her, at this lady's particular request.

Pounce. And the thousand pounds you promised in your brother's behalf, I'm willing should be hers also.

Cler. Sen. Then go in, and bring 'em all back to make the best of an ill game; we'll eat the dinner and have a dance together, or we shall transgress all form.

Re-enter FAINLOVE, HUMPHRY, *and* SIR HARRY.

Sir Har. Well, since you say you are worth something, and the boy has set his heart upon you, I'll have patience till I see further.

Pounce. Come, come, Sir Harry, you shall find my alliance more considerable than you imagine; the Pounces are a family that will always have money, if there's any in the world—Come, fiddles.

[*A Dance here.*]

Cler. Sen. You've seen th' extremes of the domestic life,
A son too much confined—too free a wife;
By generous bonds you either should restrain,
And only on their inclinations gain;
Wives to obey must love, children revere,
While only slaves are governed by their fear.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by MR. ESTCOURT.[1]

BRITONS, who constant war, with factious rage,
For liberty against each other wage,
From foreign insult save this English stage.
No more th' Italian squalling tribe admit,
In tongues unknown; 'tis popery in wit.[2]
The songs (theirselves confess) from Rome they bring,
And 'tis high mass, for ought you know, they sing.
Husbands take care, the danger may come nigher,
The women say their eunuch is a friar.

But is it not a serious ill to see
Europe's great arbiters so mean can be;
Passive, with an affected joy to sit,
Suspend their native taste of manly wit;
Neglect their comic humour, tragic rage,
For known defects of nature, and of age?

[1] "At the Theatre Royal to-morrow, being the 18th October, will be revived a Comedy called the *Spanish Friar: or the Double Discovery*. The part of the Friar to be performed by Mr. Estcourt; being the first time of his appearance on the English stage. Beginning exactly at half-an-hour after five o'clock" (*Daily Courant*, Oct. 17, 1704). Richard Estcourt was an excellent companion, and a favourite of Steele's, who praised him several times in the *Spectator*, and wrote an excellent and touching paper (No. 468) on his death in 1712, in the course of which he says: "When a man of his wit and smartness could put on an . . . . air of insipid cunning and vivacity in the character of Pounce in the *Tender Husband*, it is folly to dispute his capacity and success, as he was an actor."

[2] On March 8, 1705 (*Daily Courant*), there was acted at Drury Lane "a new opera (all sung after the Italian manner) called, *Arsinoe, Queen of Cyprus*. As it was performed before Her Majesty at St. James's on her birthday."

Arise, for shame, ye conquering Britons rise,
Such unadorned effeminacy despise;
Admire (if you will dote on foreign wit)
Not what Italians sing, but Romans writ.
So shall less works, such as to-night's slight play,
At your command with justice die away;
Till then forgive your writers, that can't bear
You should such very tramontanes appear,
The nations which contemn you to revere.

Let Anna's soil be known for all its charms;
As famed for liberal sciences, as arms:
Let those derision meet, who would advance
Manners or speech, from Italy or France.
Let them learn you, who would your favour find,
And English be the language of mankind.

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS.

"Illud genus narrationis, quod in personis positum est, debet habere sermones festivitatem, animorum dissimilitudinem, gravitatem, lenitatem, spem, metum, suspicionem, desiderium, dissimulationem, misericordiam, rerum varietates, fortunæ commutationem, insperatum incommodum, subitam letitiam, jucundum exitum rerum."[1]—CICERO, Rhetor. ad Herenn. Lib. i.

[1] The kind of narrative which is presented on the stage ought to be marked by gaiety of dialogue, diversity of character, seriousness, tenderness, hope, fear, suspicion, desire, pity, variety of events, changes of fortune, unexpected disaster, sudden joy, and a happy ending.

THE *Conscious Lovers*, a Comedy which had been long in preparation, was acted at Drury Lane Theatre on November 7, 1722, "with new scenes and all the characters new drest," and with Booth (who had acted the part of Pamphilus — the prototype of young Bevil — at Westminster with great success), Wilks (Myrtle), Cibber (Tom), Mills (Sir John Bevil), Mrs. Oldfield (Indiana), and Mrs. Younger (Phillis) in the principal parts. The play ran for eighteen nights, and was a great success. It was often revived between 1722 and 1760, and was acted at Covent Garden in 1810, and at Bath in 1818. Phillis was Peg Woffington's second speaking character in Dublin, and she took that part on March 9, 1741, during her first season in London. The play was published by Tonson on December 1, 1722, with the date 1723 on the title-page. The general idea of the piece is taken from Terence's *Andria*, but the original is widely departed from after the opening scenes. Colley Cibber lent material aid in preparing the play for representation. It was attacked by John Dennis in two pamphlets, and defended by Benjamin Victor and others.

To

THE KING.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,

AFTER having aspired to the highest and most laudable ambition, that of following the cause of liberty, I should not have humbly petitioned your Majesty for a direction of the theatre, had I not believed success in that province an happiness much to be wished by an honest man, and highly conducing to the prosperity of the commonwealth. It is in this view I lay before your Majesty a Comedy which the audience, in justice to themselves, has supported and encouraged, and is the prelude of what, by your Majesty's influence and favour, may be attempted in future representations.

The imperial mantle, the royal vestment, and the shining diadem are what strike ordinary minds; but your Majesty's native goodness, your passion for justice, and her constant assessor mercy, is what continually surrounds you in the view of intelligent spirits, and gives hope to the suppliant, who sees he has more than succeeded in giving your Majesty an opportunity of doing good. Our King is above the greatness of royalty, and every act of his will which makes another man happy has ten times

more charms in it than one that makes himself appear raised above the condition of others. But even this carries unhappiness with it; for calm dominion, equal grandeur, and familiar greatness do not easily affect the imagination of the vulgar, who cannot see power but in terror; and as fear moves mean spirits, and love prompts great ones to obey, the insinuations of malcontents are directed accordingly; and the unhappy people are ensnared, from want of reflection, into disrespectful ideas of their gracious and amiable sovereign, and then only begin to apprehend the greatness of their master when they have incurred his displeasure.

As your Majesty was invited to the throne of a willing people, for their own sakes, and has ever enjoyed it with contempt of the ostentation of it, we beseech you to protect us who revere your title as we love your person. 'Tis to be a savage to be a rebel, and they who have fallen from you have not so much forfeited their allegiance as lost their humanity. And, therefore, if it were only to preserve myself from the imputation of being amongst the insensible and abandoned, I would beg permission in the most public manner possible to profess myself, with the utmost sincerity and zeal,

Sire,

Your Majesty's

Most devoted subject

And servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

THE PREFACE[1]

THIS Comedy has been received with universal acceptance, for it was in every part excellently performed; and there needs no other applause of the actors but that they excelled according to the dignity and difficulty of the character they represented. But this great favour done to the work in acting renders the expectation still the greater from the author, to keep up the spirit in the representation of the closet, or any other circumstance of the reader, whether alone or in company; to which I can only say that it must be remembered, a play is to be seen, and is made to be represented with the advantage of action, nor can appear but with half the spirit without it. For the greatest effect of a play in reading is to excite the reader to go to see it; and when he does so, it is then a play has the effect of example and precept.

The chief design of this was to be an innocent performance, and the audience have abundantly shown how ready they are to support what is visibly intended that way. Nor do I make any difficulty to acknowledge that the whole was writ for the sake of the scene of the Fourth Act, wherein Mr. Bevil evades the quarrel with

[1] The original MS. of this Preface is among the papers at Blenheim, where there are also some rough notes for a Preface, *e.g.*, "The fourth act was the business of the play. The case of duelling. I have fought, nor shall I ever fight again. . . . Addison told me I had a faculty of drawing tears. . . . Be that as it will, I shall endeavour to do what I can to promote noble things, which I will do as well as I can."

his friend, and[1] hope it may have some effect upon the Goths and Vandals that frequent the theatres, or a more polite audience may supply their absence.

But this incident, and the case of the father and daughter, are esteemed by some people no subjects of comedy; but I cannot be of their mind, for anything that has its foundation in happiness and success must be allowed to be the object of comedy; and sure it must be an improvement of it to introduce a joy too exquisite for laughter, that can have no spring but in delight, which is the case of this young lady. I must, therefore, contend that the tears which were shed on that occasion flowed from reason and good sense, and that men ought not to be laughed at for weeping till we are come to a more clear notion of what is to be imputed to the hardness of the head and the softness of the heart; and I think it was very politely said of Mr. Wilks, to one who told him there was a General[2] weeping for Indiana, "I'll warrant he'll fight ne'er the worse for that." To be apt to give way to the impressions of humanity, is the excellence of a right disposition and the natural working of a well-turned spirit. But as I have suffered by critics who have got no farther than to inquire whether they ought to be pleased or not,[3] I would willingly find them properer matter for their employment, and revive here a song which was omitted for want of a performer, and designed for the entertainment of Indiana. Signor Carbonelli,[4] instead of it, played[5] on the fiddle, and it is for want of a singer that such advantageous things are said of an instrument which were designed for a voice. The song is the distress of a

[1] "The stupid and diabolical custom of duelling" (MS. erased).

[2] The Hon. Brigadier-General Charles Churchill, who lived with Mrs. Oldfield after Maynwaring's death (Egerton's *Memoirs of Mrs. Anne Oldfield*, 1731, pp. 67, 121).

[3] "To enquire what should not which does please." (MS.)

[4] Carbonelli, a violinist, who had then not long been in England, had a benefit in 1722 at Drury Lane Theatre. He published twelve solos, dedicated to the Duke of Rutland. Afterwards he became a wine-merchant.

[5] "Played admirably well." (MS.)

love-sick maid, and may be a fit entertainment for some small critics[1] to examine whether the passion is just or the distress male or female.

I.

From place to place forlorn I go,
With downcast eyes a silent shade,
Forbidden to declare my woe;
To speak till spoken to, afraid.

II.

My inward pangs, my secret grief,
My soft consenting looks betray.
He loves, but gives me no relief;
Why speaks not he who may?

It remains to say a word concerning Terence, and I am extremely surprised to find what Mr. Cibber told me prove a truth:[2] that what I valued myself so much upon—the translation of him[3]—should be imputed to me as a reproach. Mr. Cibber's zeal for the work, his care and application in instructing the actors and altering the disposition of the scenes, when I was, through sickness, unable to cultivate such things myself, has been a very obliging favour and friendship to me. For this reason I was very hardly persuaded[4] to throw away Terence's celebrated funeral, and take only the bare authority of the young man's character; and how I have worked it into an Englishman, and made use of the same circumstances of discovering a daughter when we least hoped for one, is humbly submitted to the learned reader.

[1] "Some great critics" (MS.)

[2] Wags in the newspapers of the day pointed out that these words might be read as meaning that Steele was surprised at finding to be true anything that Cibber said.

[3] "The imitation of Pamphilus." (MS.)

[4] "By him." (MS.)

PROLOGUE.

By Mr. Welsted.[1]

Spoken by Mr. Wilks.

To win your hearts and to secure your praise,
The comic writers strive by various ways;
By subtle stratagems they act their game,
And leave untried no avenue to fame.
One writes the spouse a beating from his wife,
And says each stroke was copied from the life.
Some fix all wit and humour in grimace,
And make a livelihood of Pinkey's[2] face.
Here, one gay show and costly habits tries,
Confiding to the judgment of your eyes;
Another smuts his scene (a cunning shaver),
Sure of the rakes' and of the wenches' favour.
Oft have these arts prevailed, and one may guess,
If practised o'er again, would find success.
But the bold sage—the poet of to-night—
By new and desperate rules resolved to write;
Fain would he give more just applauses rise,
And please by wit that scorns the aids of vice;
The praise he seeks from worthier motives springs,
Such praise as praise to those that give it brings.

[1] Leonard Welsted, a protégé of Steele's, wrote also the Epilogue. He was a clerk in the office of one of the Secretaries of State, and wrote a play and various poems, some of which were addressed to Steele. Pope gave him a place in the *Dunciad*, and Swift attacked him in his *On Poetry: a Rhapsody*.

[2] Pinkethman.

Your aid most humbly sought, then, Britons lend,
And liberal mirth like liberal men defend.
No more let ribaldry, with licence writ,
Usurp the name of eloquence or wit;
No more let lawless farce uncensured go,
The lewd dull gleanings of a Smithfield show.[1]
'Tis yours with breeding to refine the age,
To chasten wit, and moralise the stage.
Ye modest, wise and good, ye fair, ye brave,
To-night the champion of your virtues save;
Redeem from long contempt the comic name,
And judge politely for your country's fame.

[1] The reference is to Bartholomew Fair, which was held in Smithfield.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir JOHN BEVIL.

Mr. SEALAND.

BEVIL, JUN., in love with INDIANA.

MYRTLE, in love with LUCINDA.

CIMBERTON, a Coxcomb.

HUMPHRY, an old Servant to Sir JOHN.

TOM, Servant to BEVIL, JUN.

DANIEL, a Country Boy, Servant to INDIANA.

Mrs. SEALAND, second Wife to SEALAND.

ISABELLA, Sister to SEALAND.

INDIANA, SEALAND'S Daughter, by his first Wife.

LUCINDA, SEALAND'S Daughter, by his second Wife.

PHILLIS, Maid to LUCINDA.

SCENE.—LONDON.

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—Sir John Bevil's *House.*

Enter Sir John Bevil *and* Humphry.

SIR J. BEV. Have you ordered that I should not be interrupted while I am dressing?

Humph. Yes, sir; I believed you had something of moment to say to me.

Sir J. Bev. Let me see, Humphry; I think it is now full forty years since I first took thee to be about myself.

Humph. I thank you, sir, it has been an easy forty years; and I have passed 'em without much sickness, care, or labour.

Sir J. Bev. Thou hast a brave constitution; you are a year or two older than I am, sirrah.

Humph. You have ever been of that mind, sir.

Sir J. Bev. You knave, you know it; I took thee for thy gravity and sobriety, in my wild years.

Humph. Ah, sir! our manners were formed from our

different fortunes, not our different age. Wealth gave a loose to your youth, and poverty put a restraint upon mine.

Sir J. Bev. Well, Humphry, you know I have been a kind master to you; I have used you, for the ingenuous nature I observed in you from the beginning, more like an humble friend than a servant.

Humph. I humbly beg you'll be so tender of me as to explain your commands, sir, without any farther preparation.

Sir J. Bev. I'll tell thee, then: In the first place, this wedding of my son's in all probability—shut the door—will never be at all.

Humph. How, sir! not be at all? for what reason is it carried on in appearance?

Sir J. Bev. Honest Humphry, have patience; and I'll tell thee all in order. I have, myself, in some part of my life, lived (indeed) with freedom, but, I hope, without reproach. Now, I thought liberty would be as little injurious to my son; therefore, as soon as he grew towards man, I indulged him in living after his own manner. I knew not how, otherwise, to judge of his inclination; for what can be concluded from a behaviour under restraint and fear?[1] But what charms me above all expression is, that my son has never, in the least action, the most distant hint or word, valued himself upon that great estate of his mother's, which, according to our marriage settlement, he has had ever since he came to age.

Humph. No, sir; on the contrary, he seems afraid of appearing to enjoy it, before you or any belonging to you. He is as dependent and resigned to your will as if he had not a farthing but what must come from your immediate bounty. You have ever acted like a good

[1] Here and throughout this dialogue Steele closely follows the conversation of Simo and Sosia in Terence's *Andria*, Act I. scene i.

and generous father, and he like an obedient and grateful son.

Sir J. Bev. Nay, his carriage is so easy to all with whom he converses, that he is never assuming, never prefers himself to others, nor ever is guilty of that rough sincerity which a man is not called to, and certainly disobliges most of his acquaintance; to be short, Humphry, his reputation was so fair in the world, that old Sealand, the great India merchant, has offered his only daughter, and sole heiress to that vast estate of his, as a wife for him. You may be sure I made no difficulties, the match was agreed on, and this very day named for the wedding.

Humph. What hinders the proceeding?

Sir J. Bev. Don't interrupt me. You know I was last Thursday at the masquerade; my son, you may remember, soon found us out. He knew his grandfather's habit, which I then wore; and though it was the mode, in the last age, yet the masquers, you know, followed us as if we had been the most monstrous figures in that whole assembly.

Humph. I remember, indeed, a young man of quality in the habit of a clown, that was particularly troublesome.

Sir J. Bev. Right; he was too much what he seemed to be. You remember how impertinently he followed and teased us, and would know who we were.

Humph. I know he has a mind to come into that particular. [*Aside.*

Sir J. Bev. Ay, he followed us till the gentleman who led the lady in the Indian mantle presented that gay creature to the rustic, and bid him (like Cymon in the fable) grow polite by falling in love, and let that worthy old gentleman alone, meaning me. The clown was not reformed, but rudely persisted, and offered to force off my mask; with that, the gentleman, throwing off his own, appeared to be my son, and in his concern for me, tore off that of the nobleman; at this they seized each other;

the company called the guards, and in the surprise the lady swooned away; upon which my son quitted his adversary, and had now no care but of the lady. When raising her in his arms, "Art thou gone," cried he, "for ever?—forbid it, Heaven!" She revived at his known voice, and with the most familiar, though modest, gesture, hangs in safety over his shoulder weeping, but wept as in the arms of one before whom she could give herself a loose, were she not under observation; while she hides her face in his neck, he carefully conveys her from the company.

Humph. I have observed this accident has dwelt upon you very strongly.

Sir J. Bev. Her uncommon air, her noble modesty, the dignity of her person, and the occasion itself, drew the whole assembly together; and I soon heard it buzzed about she was the adopted daughter of a famous sea-officer who had served in France. Now this unexpected and public discovery of my son's so deep concern for her——

Humph. Was what, I suppose, alarmed Mr. Sealand, in behalf of his daughter, to break off the match?

Sir J. Bev. You are right. He came to me yesterday and said he thought himself disengaged from the bargain; being credibly informed my son was already married, or worse, to the lady at the masquerade. I palliated matters, and insisted on our agreement; but we parted with little less than a direct breach between us.[1]

Humph. Well, sir; and what notice have you taken of all this to my young master?

Sir J. Bev. That's what I wanted to debate with you. I have said nothing to him yet—but look you, Humphry, if there is so much in this amour of his, that he denies upon my summons to marry, I have cause enough

[1] This and the two following speeches by Sir John Bevil are borrowed from Terence.

to be offended; and then by my insisting upon his marrying to-day, I shall know how far he is engaged to this lady in masquerade, and from thence only shall be able to take my measures. In the meantime I would have you find out how far that rogue, his man, is let into his secret. He, I know, will play tricks as much to cross me, as to serve his master.

Humph. Why do you think so of him, sir? I believe he is no worse than I was for you, at your son's age.

Sir J. Bev. I see it in the rascal's looks. But I have dwelt on these things too long; I'll go to my son immediately, and while I'm gone, your part is to convince his rogue, Tom, that I am in earnest.—I'll leave him to you. [*Exit* SIR JOHN BEVIL.

Humph. Well, though this father and son live as well together as possible, yet their fear of giving each other pain is attended with constant mutual uneasiness. I'm sure I have enough to do to be honest, and yet keep well with them both. But they know I love 'em, and that makes the task less painful however. Oh, here's the prince of poor coxcombs, the representative of all the better fed than taught. Ho! ho! Tom, whither so gay and so airy this morning?

Enter TOM, *singing.*

Tom. Sir, we servants of single gentlemen are another kind of people than you domestic ordinary drudges that do business; we are raised above you. The pleasures of board-wages, tavern dinners, and many a clear gain; vails, alas! you never heard or dreamt of.

Humph. Thou hast follies and vices enough for a man of ten thousand a year, though 'tis but as t'other day that I sent for you to town to put you into Mr. Sealand's family, that you might learn a little before I put you to my young master, who is too gentle for training such a rude thing as you were into proper obedience. You

then pulled off your hat to everyone you met in the street, like a bashful great awkward cub as you were. But your great oaken cudgel, when you were a booby, became you much better than that dangling stick at your button, now you are a fop. That's fit for nothing, except it hangs there to be ready for your master's hand when you are impertinent.

Tom. Uncle Humphry, you know my master scorns to strike his servants. You talk as if the world was now just as it was when my old master and you were in your youth; when you went to dinner because it was so much o'clock, when the great blow was given in the hall at the pantry door, and all the family came out of their holes in such strange dresses and formal faces as you see in the pictures in our long gallery in the country.

Humph. Why, you wild rogue!

Tom. You could not fall to your dinner till a formal fellow in a black gown said something over the meat, as if the cook had not made it ready enough.

Humph. Sirrah, who do you prate after? Despising men of sacred characters! I hope you never heard my good young master talk so like a profligate.

Tom. Sir, I say you put upon me, when I first came to town, about being orderly, and the doctrine of wearing shams to make linen last clean a fortnight, keeping my clothes fresh, and wearing a frock within doors.

Humph. Sirrah, I gave you those lessons because I supposed at that time your master and you might have dined at home every day, and cost you nothing; then you might have made a good family servant. But the gang you have frequented since at chocolate houses and taverns, in a continual round of noise and extravagance—

Tom. I don't know what you heavy inmates call noise and extravagance; but we gentlemen, who are well fed, and cut a figure, sir, think it a fine life, and that we must be very pretty fellows who are kept only to be looked at.

Humph. Very well, sir, I hope the fashion of being lewd and extravagant, despising of decency and order, is almost at an end, since it has arrived at persons of your quality.

Tom. Master Humphry, ha! ha! you were an unhappy lad to be sent up to town in such queer days as you were. Why, now, sir, the lackeys are the men of pleasure of the age, the top gamesters; and many a laced coat about town have had their education in our party-coloured regiment. We are false lovers; have a taste of music, poetry, billet-doux, dress, politics; ruin damsels; and when we are tired of this lewd town, and have a mind to take up, whip into our masters' wigs and linen, and marry fortunes.

Humph. Hey-day!

Tom. Nay, sir, our order is carried up to the highest dignities and distinctions; step but into the Painted Chamber,[1] and by our titles you'd take us all for men of quality. Then, again, come down to the Court of Requests, and you see us all laying our broken heads together for the good of the nation; and though we never carry a question nemine contradicente, yet this I can say, with a safe conscience (and I wish every gentleman of our cloth could lay his hand upon his heart and say the same), that I never took so much as a single mug of beer for my vote in all my life.

Humph. Sirrah, there is no enduring your extravagance; I'll hear you prate no longer. I wanted to see you to enquire how things go with your master, as far as you understand them; I suppose he knows he is to be married to-day.

Tom. Ay, sir, he knows it, and is dressed as gay as

[1] In the old Royal Palace at Westminster, the House of Lords was formed out of the ancient Court of Requests, and the old Painted Chamber separated the Lords from the Commons. Steele has described (*Spectator*, No. 88) how servants, waiting for their masters at an alehouse at Westminster, debated upon public affairs, addressing each other by their employers' names.

the sun; but, between you and I, my dear, he has a very heavy heart under all that gaiety. As soon as he was dressed I retired, but overheard him sigh in the most heavy manner. He walked thoughtfully to and fro in the room, then went into his closet; when he came out he gave me this for his mistress, whose maid, you know——

Humph. Is passionately fond of your fine person.

Tom. The poor fool is so tender, and loves to hear me talk of the world, and the plays, operas, and ridottos[1] for the winter, the parks and Belsize[2] for our summer diversions; and "Lard!" says she, "you are so wild, but you have a world of humour."

Humph. Coxcomb! Well, but why don't you run with your master's letter to Mrs. Lucinda, as he ordered you?

Tom. Because Mrs. Lucinda is not so easily come at as you think for.

Humph. Not easily come at? Why, sirrah, are not her father and my old master agreed that she and Mr. Bevil are to be one flesh before to-morrow morning?

Tom. It's no matter for that; her mother, it seems, Mrs. Sealand, has not agreed to it; and you must know, Mr. Humphry, that in that family the grey mare is the better horse.

Humph. What dost thou mean?

Tom. In one word, Mrs. Sealand pretends to have a

[1] At the ridotto there was music, followed by dancing, the company passing, when the music was over, from the pit to the stage. Burney says that this Italian entertainment was first introduced into England in 1722, the year in which Steele produced *The Conscious Lovers*.

[2] Belsize House was the forerunner of Ranelagh and Vauxhall. There were gardens, in which refreshments could be obtained, and hunting, races, &c., were provided to amuse the visitors, for whose protection twelve stout men, well armed, patrolled the road to London. A poetical satire, *Belsize House*, appeared in 1722, the year of this play. In the same year unlawful gaming at Belsize was forbidden (Park's *Hampstead*, 246—9).

will of her own, and has provided a relation of hers, a stiff, starched philosopher, and a wise fool, for her daughter; for which reason, for these ten days past, she has suffered no message nor letter from my master to come near her.

Humph. And where had you this intelligence?

Tom. From a foolish fond soul that can keep nothing from me; one that will deliver this letter too, if she is rightly managed.

Humph. What! her pretty handmaid, Mrs. Phillis?

Tom. Even she, sir; this is the very hour, you know, she usually comes hither, under a pretence of a visit to your housekeeper, forsooth, but in reality to have a glance at——

Humph. Your sweet face, I warrant you.

Tom. Nothing else in nature; you must know, I love to fret and play with the little wanton.

Humph. Play with the little wanton! What will this world come to!

Tom. I met her this morning in a new manteau and petticoat, not a bit the worse for her lady's wearing; and she has always new thoughts and new airs with new clothes—then she never fails to steal some glance or gesture from every visitant at their house; and is, indeed, the whole town of coquets at second-hand. But here she comes; in one motion she speaks and describes herself better than all the words in the world can.

Humph. Then I hope, dear sir, when your own affair is over, you will be so good as to mind your master's with her.

Tom. Dear Humphry, you know my master is my friend, and those are people I never forget.

Humph. Sauciness itself! but I'll leave you to do your best for him. [*Exit.*

Enter PHILLIS.[1]

Phil. Oh, Mr. Thomas, is Mrs. Sugar-key at home? Lard, one is almost ashamed to pass along the streets! The town is quite empty, and nobody of fashion left in it; and the ordinary people do so stare to see anything, dressed like a woman of condition, as it were on the same floor with them, pass by. Alas! alas! it is a sad thing to walk. O fortune! fortune!

Tom. What! a sad thing to walk? Why, Madam Phillis, do you wish yourself lame?

Phil. No, Mr. Tom, but I wish I were generally carried in a coach or chair, and of a fortune neither to stand nor go, but to totter, or slide, to be short-sighted, or stare, to fleer in the face, to look distant, to observe, to overlook, yet all become me; and, if I was rich, I could twire[2] and loll as well as the best of them. Oh, Tom! Tom! is it not a pity that you should be so great a coxcomb, and I so great a coquet, and yet be such poor devils as we are?

Tom. Mrs. Phillis, I am your humble servant for that——

Phil. Yes, Mr. Thomas, I know how much you are my humble servant, and know what you said to Mrs. Judy, upon seeing her in one of her lady's cast manteaus:

[1] Among the Blenheim papers is a fragment, in Steele's writing, of a dialogue between two servants, Parmeno and Pythias—names taken, no doubt, from Terence's *Eunuchus*. The pair discuss the charm of the soft moments of servants in love, free from their usual restraints. Why should any man usurp more than his share of the atmosphere? The whole art of a serving-man is "to be here and there, and everywhere, unheard and unseen till you are wanted, and never absent when you are. This gives our masters and mistresses the free room and scope to do and act as they please—they are to make all the bustle, all the show—we are like convenient demons or apparitions about 'em, never to take up space or fill the air nor be heard of or seen but when commanded." Pythias remarks how much she learns from Parmeno's conversation, and produces a little collation from the last night's supper which she has prepared for him. Parmeno eats the eggs, gorges, sings a song, and says kind things between whiles to Pythias.

[2] Leer, throw glances.

That any one would have thought her the lady, and that she had ordered the other to wear it till it sat easy; for now only it was becoming. To my lady it was only a covering, to Mrs. Judy it was a habit. This you said, after somebody or other. Oh, Tom! Tom! thou art as false and as base as the best gentleman of them all; but, you wretch, talk to me no more on the old odious subject—don't, I say.

Tom. I know not how to resist your commands, madam. [*In a submissive tone, retiring.*

Phil. Commands about parting are grown mighty easy to you of late.

Tom. Oh, I have her; I have nettled and put her into the right temper to be wrought upon and set a-prating. [*Aside.*]—Why, truly, to be plain with you, Mrs. Phillis, I can take little comfort of late in frequenting your house.

Phil. Pray, Mr. Thomas, what is it all of a sudden offends your nicety at our house?

Tom. I don't care to speak particulars, but I dislike the whole.

Phil. I thank you, sir, I am a part of that whole.

Tom. Mistake me not, good Phillis.

Phil. Good Phillis! Saucy enough. But however——

Tom. I say, it is that thou art a part, which gives me pain for the disposition of the whole. You must know, madam, to be serious, I am a man, at the bottom, of prodigious nice honour. You are too much exposed to company at your house. To be plain, I don't like so many, that would be your mistress's lovers, whispering to you.

Phil. Don't think to put that upon me. You say this, because I wrung you to the heart when I touched your guilty conscience about Judy.

Tom. Ah, Phillis! Phillis! if you but knew my heart!

Phil. I know too much on't.

Tom. Nay, then, poor Crispo's [1] fate and mine are one. Therefore give me leave to say, or sing at least, as he does upon the same occasion—

"Se vedette," &c. [*Sings.*]

Phil. What, do you think I'm to be fobbed off with a song? I don't question but you have sung the same to Mrs. Judy too.

Tom. Don't disparage your charms, good Phillis, with jealousy of so worthless an object; besides, she is a poor hussy, and if you doubt the sincerity of my love, you will allow me true to my interest. You are a fortune, Phillis.

Phil. What would the fop be at now? In good time, indeed, you shall be setting up for a fortune!

Tom. Dear Mrs. Phillis, you have such a spirit that we shall never be dull in marriage when we come together. But I tell you, you are a fortune, and you have an estate in my hands. [*He pulls out a purse, she eyes it.*

Phil. What pretence have I to what is in your hands, Mr. Tom?

Tom. As thus: there are hours, you know, when a lady is neither pleased or displeased; neither sick or well; when she lolls or loiters; when she's without desires—rom having more of everything than she knows what to do with.

Phil. Well, what then?

Tom. When she has not life enough to keep her bright eyes quite open, to look at her own dear image in the glass.

Phil. Explain thyself, and don't be so fond of thy own prating.

Tom. There are also prosperous and good-natured moments: as when a knot or a patch is happily fixed; when the complexion particularly flourishes.

[1] See page 307.

Phil. Well, what then? I have not patience!

Tom. Why, then—or on the like occasions—we servants who have skill to know how to time business, see when such a pretty folded thing as this [*Shows a letter.*] may be presented, laid, or dropped, as best suits the present humour. And, madam, because it is a long wearisome journey to run through all the several stages of a lady's temper, my master, who is the most reasonable man in the world, presents you this to bear your charges on the road. [*Gives her the purse.*

Phil. Now you think me a corrupt hussy.

Tom. O fie, I only think you'll take the letter.

Phil. Nay, I know you do, but I know my own innocence; I take it for my mistress's sake.

Tom. I know it, my pretty one, I know it.

Phil. Yes, I say I do it, because I would not have my mistress deluded by one who gives no proof of his passion; but I'll talk more of this as you see me on my way home. No, Tom, I assure thee, I take this trash of thy master's, not for the value of the thing, but as it convinces me he has a true respect for my mistress. I remember a verse to the purpose—

They may be false who languish and complain,
But they who part with money never feign.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—BEVIL, JUN.'S *Lodgings.*

BEVIL, JUN., *reading.*

Bev. Jun. These moral writers practise virtue after death. This charming vision of Mirza![1] Such an

[1] In the Vision of Mirza (*Spectator*, No. 159), Addison pictured the Happy Islands which were the abode of good men after death. "Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward?"

author consulted in a morning sets the spirit for the vicissitudes of the day better than the glass does a man's person. But what a day have I to go through! to put on an easy look with an aching heart! If this lady my father urges me to marry should not refuse me, my dilemma is insupportable. But why should I fear it? Is not she in equal distress with me? Has not the letter I have sent her this morning confessed my inclination to another? Nay, have I not moral assurances of her engagements, too, to my friend Myrtle? It's impossible but she must give in to it; for, sure, to be denied is a favour any man may pretend to. It must be so—Well, then, with the assurance of being rejected, I think I may confidently say to my father, I am ready to marry her. Then let me resolve upon, what I am not very good at, though it is an honest dissimulation.

Enter TOM.

Tom. Sir John Bevil, sir, is in the next room.

Bev. Jun. Dunce! Why did not you bring him in?

Tom. I told him, sir, you were in your closet.

Bev. Jun. I thought you had known, sir, it was my duty to see my father anywhere.

[*Going himself to the door.*

Tom. The devil's in my master! he has always more wit than I have. [*Aside.*

BEVIL, JUN., *introducing* SIR JOHN.

Bev. Jun. Sir, you are the most gallant, the most complaisant of all parents. Sure, 'tis not a compliment to say these lodgings are yours. Why would you not walk in, sir?

Sir J. Bev. I was loth to interrupt you unseasonably on your wedding-day.

Bev. Jun. One to whom I am beholden for my birthday might have used less ceremony.

Sir J. Bev. Well, son, I have intelligence you have writ to your mistress this morning. It would please my curiosity to know the contents of a wedding-day letter; for courtship must then be over.

Bev. Jun. I assure you, sir, there was no insolence in it upon the prospect of such a vast fortune's being added to our family; but much acknowledgment of the lady's greater desert.

Sir J. Bev. But, dear Jack, are you in earnest in all this? And will you really marry her?

Bev. Jun. Did I ever disobey any command of yours, sir? nay, any inclination that I saw you bent upon?

Sir J. Bev. Why, I can't say you have, son; but methinks in this whole business, you have not been so warm as I could have wished you. You have visited her, it's true, but you have not been particular. Everyone knows you can say and do as handsome things as any man; but you have done nothing but lived in the general—been complaisant only.

Bev. Jun. As I am ever prepared to marry if you bid me, so I am ready to let it alone if you will have me.

[HUMPHRY *enters, unobserved.*

Sir J. Bev. Look you there now! why, what am I to think of this so absolute and so indifferent a resignation?

Bev. Jun. Think? that I am still your son, sir. Sir, you have been married, and I have not. And you have, sir, found the inconvenience there is when a man weds with too much love in his head. I have been told, sir, that at the time you married, you made a mighty bustle on the occasion. There was challenging and fighting, scaling walls, locking up the lady, and the gallant under an arrest for fear of killing all his rivals. Now, sir, I suppose you having found the ill consequences of these strong passions and prejudices, in preference of one woman to another, in case of a man's becoming a widower——

Sir J. Bev. How is this?

Bev. Jun. I say, sir, experience has made you wiser in your care of me; for, sir, since you lost my dear mother, your time has been so heavy, so lonely, and so tasteless, that you are so good as to guard me against the like unhappiness, by marrying me prudentially by way of bargain and sale. For, as you well judge, a woman that is espoused for a fortune, is yet a better bargain if she dies; for then a man still enjoys what he did marry, the money, and is disencumbered of what he did not marry, the woman.

Sir J. Bev. But pray, sir, do you think Lucinda, then, a woman of such little merit?

Bev. Jun. Pardon me, sir, I don't carry it so far neither; I am rather afraid I shall like her too well; she has, for one of her fortune, a great many needless and superfluous good qualities.

Sir J. Bev. I am afraid, son, there's something I don't see yet, something that's smothered under all this raillery.

Bev. Jun. Not in the least, sir. If the lady is dressed and ready, you see I am. I suppose the lawyers are ready too.

Humph. This may grow warm if I don't interpose. [*Aside.*]—Sir, Mr. Sealand is at the coffee-house, and has sent to speak with you.

Sir J. Bev. Oh! that's well! Then I warrant the lawyers are ready. Son, you'll be in the way, you say.

Bev. Jun. If you please, sir, I'll take a chair, and go to Mr. Sealand's, where the young lady and I will wait your leisure.

Sir J. Bev. By no means. The old fellow will be so vain if he sees——

Bev. Jun. Ay; but the young lady, sir, will think me so indifferent.

Humph. Ay, there you are right; press your readiness to go to the bride—he won't let you. [*Aside to* BEV. JUN.

Bev. Jun. Are you sure of that? [*Aside to* HUMPH.

Humph. How he likes being prevented. [*Aside.*

Sir J. Bev. No, no. You are an hour or two too early. [*Looking on his watch.*

Bev. Jun. You'll allow me, sir, to think it too late to visit a beautiful, virtuous young woman, in the pride and bloom of life, ready to give herself to my arms; and to place her happiness or misery, for the future, in being agreeable or displeasing to me, is a——Call a chair.

Sir J. Bev. No, no, no, dear Jack; this Sealand is a moody old fellow. There's no dealing with some people but by managing with indifference. We must leave to him the conduct of this day. It is the last of his commanding his daughter.

Bev. Jun. Sir, he can't take it ill, that I am impatient to be hers.

Sir J. Bev. Pray let me govern in this matter; you can't tell how humorsome old fellows are. There's no offering reason to some of 'em, especially when they are rich.—If my son should see him before I've brought old Sealand into better temper, the match would be impracticable. [*Aside.*

Humph. Pray, sir, let me beg you to let Mr. Bevil go.—See whether he will or not. [*Aside to* SIR JOHN]—[*Then to* BEV.] Pray, sir, command yourself; since you see my master is positive, it is better you should not go.

Bev. Jun. My father commands me, as to the object of my affections; but I hope he will not, as to the warmth and height of them.

Sir J. Bev. So! I must even leave things as I found them; and in the meantime, at least, keep old Sealand out of his sight—Well, son, I'll go myself and take orders in your affair. You'll be in the way, I suppose, if I send to you. I'll leave your old friend with you—

Humphry, don't let him stir, d'ye hear?—Your servant, your servant. [*Exit* SIR JOHN.

Humph. I have a sad time on't, sir, between you and my master. I see you are unwilling, and I know his violent inclinations for the match.—I must betray neither, and yet deceive you both, for your common good. Heaven grant a good end of this matter.—But there is a lady, sir, that gives your father much trouble and sorrow.—You'll pardon me.

Bev. Jun. Humphry, I know thou art a friend to both, and in that confidence I dare tell thee, that lady is a woman of honour and virtue. You may assure yourself I never will marry without my father's consent. But give me leave to say, too, this declaration does not come up to a promise that I will take whomsoever he pleases.

Humph. Come, sir, I wholly understand you. You would engage my services to free you from this woman whom my master intends you, to make way, in time, for the woman you have really a mind to.

Bev. Jun. Honest Humphry, you have always been a useful friend to my father and myself; I beg you continue your good offices, and don't let us come to the necessity of a dispute; for, if we should dispute, I must either part with more than life, or lose the best of fathers.

Humph. My dear master, were I but worthy to know this secret, that so near concerns you, my life, my all should be engaged to serve you. This, sir, I dare promise, that I am sure I will and can be secret: your trust, at worst, but leaves you where you were; and if I cannot serve you, I will at once be plain and tell you so.

Bev. Jun. That's all I ask. Thou hast made it now my interest to trust thee. Be patient, then, and hear the story of my heart.

Humph. I am all attention, sir.

Bev. Jun. You may remember, Humphry, that in my

last travels my father grew uneasy at my making so long a stay at Toulon.

Humph. I remember it; he was apprehensive some woman had laid hold of you.

Bev. Jun. His fears were just; for there I first saw this lady. She is of English birth: her father's name was Danvers—a younger brother of an ancient family, and originally an eminent merchant of Bristol, who, upon repeated misfortunes, was reduced to go privately to the Indies. In this retreat, Providence again grew favourable to his industry, and, in six years' time, restored him to his former fortunes. On this he sent directions over that his wife and little family should follow him to the Indies. His wife, impatient to obey such welcome orders, would not wait the leisure of a convoy, but took the first occasion of a single ship, and, with her husband's sister only, and this daughter, then scarce seven years old, undertook the fatal voyage—for here, poor creature, she lost her liberty and life. She and her family, with all they had, were, unfortunately, taken by a privateer from Toulon. Being thus made a prisoner, though as such not ill-treated, yet the fright, the shock, and cruel disappointment, seized with such violence upon her unhealthy frame, she sickened, pined, and died at sea.

Humph. Poor soul! O the helpless infant!

Bev. Her sister yet survived, and had the care of her. The captain, too, proved to have humanity, and became a father to her; for having himself married an English woman, and being childless, he brought home into Toulon this her little country-woman, presenting her, with all her dead mother's movables of value, to his wife, to be educated as his own adopted daughter.

Humph. Fortune here seemed again to smile on her.

Bev. Only to make her frowns more terrible; for, in his height of fortune, this captain, too, her benefactor, unfortunately was killed at sea; and dying intestate, his

estate fell wholly to an advocate, his brother, who, coming soon to take possession, there found (among his other riches) this blooming virgin at his mercy.

Humph. He durst not, sure, abuse his power?

Bev. No wonder if his pampered blood was fired at the sight of her—in short, he loved; but when all arts and gentle means had failed to move, he offered, too, his menaces in vain, denouncing vengeance on her cruelty, demanding her to account for all her maintenance from her childhood; seized on her little fortune as his own inheritance, and was dragging her by violence to prison, when Providence at the instant interposed, and sent me, by miracle, to relieve her.[1]

Humph. 'Twas Providence, indeed. But pray, sir, after all this trouble, how came this lady at last to England?

Bev. The disappointed advocate, finding she had so unexpected a support, on cooler thoughts, descended to a composition, which I, without her knowledge, secretly discharged.

Humph. That generous concealment made the obligation double.

Bev. Having thus obtained her liberty, I prevailed, not without some difficulty, to see her safe to England; where, no sooner arrived, but my father, jealous of my being imprudently engaged, immediately proposed this other fatal match that hangs upon my quiet.

Humph. I find, sir, you are irrecoverably fixed upon this lady.

Bev. As my vital life dwells in my heart—and yet you see what I do to please my father: walk in this pageantry of dress, this splendid covering of sorrow—But, Humphry, you have your lesson.

[1] In Terence, Glycerium comes to Athens with Chrysis, a courtezan, her supposed sister, and Pamphilus makes her acquaintance at Chrysis's house.

Humph. Now, sir, I have but one material question——

Bev. Ask it freely.

Humph. Is it, then, your own passion for this secret lady, or hers for you, that gives you this aversion to the match your father has proposed you?

Bev. I shall appear, Humphry, more romantic in my answer than in all the rest of my story; for though I dote on her to death, and have no little reason to believe she has the same thoughts for me, yet in all my acquaintance and utmost privacies with her, I never once directly told her that I loved.

Humph. How was it possible to avoid it?

Bev. My tender obligations to my father have laid so inviolable a restraint upon my conduct that, till I have his consent to speak, I am determined, on that subject, to be dumb for ever.

Humph. Well, sir, to your praise be it spoken, you are certainly the most unfashionable lover in Great Britain.

Enter TOM.

Tom. Sir, Mr. Myrtle's at the next door, and, if you are at leisure, will be glad to wait on you.

Bev. Whenever he pleases——hold, Tom! did you receive no answer to my letter?

Tom. Sir, I was desired to call again; for I was told her mother would not let her be out of her sight; but about an hour hence, Mrs. Lettice said, I should certainly have one.

Bev. Very well. [*Exit* TOM.

Humph. Sir, I will take another opportunity. In the meantime, I only think it proper to tell you that, from a secret I know, you may appear to your father as forward as you please, to marry Lucinda without the least hazard of its coming to a conclusion—Sir, your most obedient servant.

Bev. Honest Humphry, continue but my friend in this exigence, and you shall always find me yours. [*Exit* HUMPH.]—I long to hear how my letter has succeeded with Lucinda—but I think it cannot fail; for, at worst, were it possible she could take it ill, her resentment of my indifference may as probably occasion a delay as her taking it right. Poor Myrtle, what terrors must he be in all this while? Since he knows she is offered to me, and refused to him, there is no conversing or taking any measures with him for his own service. — But I ought to bear with my friend, and use him as one in adversity—

All his disquiets by my own I prove,
The greatest grief's perplexity in love.

[*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—Bevil, Jun.'s *Lodgings*.

Enter Bevil, Jun. *and* Tom.

TOM. Sir, Mr. Myrtle.

Bev. Jun. Very well—do you step again, and wait for an answer to my letter. [*Exit* Tom.

Enter Myrtle.

Bev. Jun. Well, Charles, why so much care in thy countenance? Is there anything in this world deserves it? You, who used to be so gay, so open, so vacant!

Myrt. I think we have of late changed complexions. You, who used to be much the graver man, are now all air in your behaviour.—But the cause of my concern may, for aught I know, be the same object that gives you all this satisfaction. In a word, I am told that you are this very day—and your dress confirms me in it—to be married to Lucinda.

Bev. Jun. You are not misinformed.—Nay, put not on the terrors of a rival till you hear me out. I shall disoblige the best of fathers if I don't seem ready to marry Lucinda; and you know I have ever told you you might make use of my secret resolution never to marry her for

your own service as you please; but I am now driven to the extremity of immediately refusing or complying unless you help me to escape the match.

Myrt. Escape? Sir, neither her merit or her fortune are below your acceptance—Escaping do you call it?

Bev. Jun. Dear sir, do you wish I should desire the match?

Myrt. No; but such is my humorous and sickly state of mind since it has been able to relish nothing but Lucinda, that though I must owe my happiness to your aversion to this marriage, I can't bear to hear her spoken of with levity or unconcern.

Bev. Jun. Pardon me, sir, I shall transgress that way no more. She has understanding, beauty, shape, complexion, wit——

Myrt. Nay, dear Bevil, don't speak of her as if you loved her neither.

Bev. Jun. Why, then, to give you ease at once, though I allow Lucinda to have good sense, wit, beauty, and virtue, I know another in whom these qualities appear to me more amiable than in her.

Myrt. There you spoke like a reasonable and good-natured friend. When you acknowledge her merit, and own your prepossession for another, at once you gratify my fondness and cure my jealousy.

Bev. Jun. But all this while you take no notice, you have no apprehension, of another man that has twice the fortune of either of us.

Myrt. Cimberton![1] hang him, a formal, philosophical, pedantic coxcomb; for the sot, with all these crude notions of divers things, under the direction of great vanity and very little judgment, shows his strongest bias is avarice; which is so predominant in him that he will examine the limbs of his mistress with the caution of a

[1] This character has no prototype in Terence's *Andria*.

jockey, and pays no more compliment to her personal charms than if she were a mere breeding animal.

Bev. Jun. Are you sure that is not affected? I have known some women sooner set on fire by that sort of negligence than by——

Myrt. No, no; hang him, the rogue has no art; it is pure, simple insolence and stupidity.

Bev. Jun. Yet, with all this, I don't take him for a fool.

Myrt. I own the man is not a natural; he has a very quick sense, though very slow understanding. He says, indeed, many things that want only the circumstances of time and place to be very just and agreeable.

Bev. Jun. Well, you may be sure of me if you can disappoint him; but my intelligence says the mother has actually sent for the conveyancer to draw articles for his marriage with Lucinda, though those for mine with her are, by her father's orders, ready for signing; but it seems she has not thought fit to consult either him or his daughter in the matter.

Myrt. Pshaw! a poor troublesome woman. Neither Lucinda nor her father will ever be brought to comply with it. Besides, I am sure Cimberton can make no settlement upon her without the concurrence of his great uncle, Sir Geoffry, in the west.

Bev. Jun. Well, sir, and I can tell you that's the very point that is now laid before her counsel, to know whether a firm settlement can be made without his uncle's actual joining in it. Now, pray consider, sir, when my affair with Lucinda comes, as it soon must, to an open rupture, how are you sure that Cimberton's fortune may not then tempt her father, too, to hear his proposals?

Myrt. There you are right, indeed; that must be provided against. Do you know who are her counsel?

Bev. Jun. Yes, for your service I have found out that, too. They are Serjeant Bramble and Old Target—by

the way, they are neither of them known in the family. Now, I was thinking why you might not put a couple of false counsel upon her to delay and confound matters a little; besides, it may probably let you into the bottom of her whole design against you.

Myrt. As how, pray?

Bev. Jun. Why, can't you slip on a black wig and a gown, and be Old Bramble yourself?

Myrt. Ha! I don't dislike it.—But what shall I do for a brother in the case?

Bev. Jun. What think you of my fellow, Tom? The rogue's intelligent, and is a good mimic. All his part will be but to stutter heartily, for that's old Target's case. Nay, it would be an immoral thing to mock him were it not that his impertinence is the occasion of its breaking out to that degree. The conduct of the scene will chiefly lie upon you.

Myrt. I like it of all things. If you'll send Tom to my chambers, I will give him full instructions. This will certainly give me occasion to raise difficulties, to puzzle or confound her project for a while at least.

Bev. Jun. I'll warrant you success.—So far we are right, then. And now, Charles, your apprehension of my marrying her is all you have to get over.

Myrt. Dear Bevil, though I know you are my friend, yet when I abstract myself from my own interest in the thing, I know no objection she can make to you, or you to her, and therefore hope——

Bev. Jun. Dear Myrtle, I am as much obliged to you for the cause of your suspicion, as I am offended at the effect; but, be assured, I am taking measures for your certain security, and that all things with regard to me will end in your entire satisfaction.

Myrt. Well, I'll promise you to be as easy and as confident as I can, though I cannot but remember that I have more than life at stake on your fidelity. [*Going.*

Bev. Jun. Then depend upon it, you have no chance against you.

Myrt. Nay, no ceremony, you know I must be going.

[*Exit* MYRT.

Bev. Jun. Well, this is another instance of the perplexities which arise, too, in faithful friendship. We must often in this life go on in our good offices, even under the displeasure of those to whom we do them, in compassion to their weaknesses and mistakes.—But all this while poor Indiana is tortured with the doubt of me. She has no support or comfort but in my fidelity, yet sees me daily pressed to marriage with another. How painful, in such a crisis, must be every hour she thinks on me! I'll let her see at least my conduct to her is not changed. I'll take this opportunity to visit her; for though the religious vow I have made to my father restrains me from ever marrying without his approbation, yet that confines me not from seeing a virtuous woman that is the pure delight of my eyes and the guiltless joy of my heart. But the best condition of human life is but a gentler misery—

To hope for perfect happiness is vain,
And love has ever its allays of pain. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—INDIANA'S *Lodgings.*

Enter ISABELLA *and* INDIANA.

Isab. Yes, I say 'tis artifice, dear child. I say to thee again and again 'tis all skill and management.

Ind. Will you persuade me there can be an ill design in supporting me in the condition of a woman of quality? attended, dressed, and lodged like one; in my appearance abroad and my furniture at home, every way in the most

sumptuous manner, and he that does it has an artifice, a design in it?

Isab. Yes, yes.

Ind. And all this without so much as explaining to me that all about me comes from him!

Isab. Ay, ay, the more for that. That keeps the title to all you have the more in him.

Ind. The more in him! He scorns the thought——

Isab. Then he—he—he——

Ind. Well, be not so eager. If he is an ill man, let us look into his stratagems. Here is another of them. [*Showing a letter.*] Here's two hundred and fifty pounds in bank notes, with these words: "To pay for the set of dressing-plate which will be brought home to-morrow." Why, dear aunt, now here's another piece of skill for you, which I own I cannot comprehend; and it is with a bleeding heart I hear you say anything to the disadvantage of Mr. Bevil. When he is present I look upon him as one to whom I owe my life and the support of it; then, again, as the man who loves me with sincerity and honour. When his eyes are cast another way, and I dare survey him, my heart is painfully divided between shame and love. Oh! could I tell you——

Isab. Ah! you need not; I imagine all this for you.

Ind. This is my state of mind in his presence; and when he is absent, you are ever dinning my ears with notions of the arts of men; that his hidden bounty, his respectful conduct, his careful provision for me, after his preserving me from utmost misery, are certain signs he means nothing but to make I know not what of me.

Isab. Oh! You have a sweet opinion of him, truly.

Ind. I have, when I am with him, ten thousand things, besides my sex's natural decency and shame, to suppress my heart, that yearns to thank, to praise, to say it loves him. I say, thus it is with me while I see him; and in his absence I am entertained with nothing but

your endeavours to tear this amiable image from my heart; and in its stead, to place a base dissembler, an artful invader of my happiness, my innocence, my honour.

Isab. Ah, poor soul! has not his plot taken? don't you die for him? has not the way he has taken, been the most proper with you? Oh! oh! He has sense, and has judged the thing right.

Ind. Go on then, since nothing can answer you; say what you will of him. Heigh! ho!

Isab. Heigh! ho! indeed. It is better to say so, as you are now, than as many others are. There are, among the destroyers of women, the gentle, the generous, the mild, the affable, the humble, who all, soon after their success in their designs, turn to the contrary of those characters. I will own to you, Mr. Bevil carries his hypocrisy the best of any man living, but still he is a man, and therefore a hypocrite. They have usurped an exemption from shame for any baseness, any cruelty towards us. They embrace without love; they make vows without conscience of obligation; they are partners, nay, seducers to the crime, wherein they pretend to be less guilty.

Ind. That's truly observed. [*Aside.*]—But what's all this to Bevil?

Isab. This it is to Bevil and all mankind. Trust not those who will think the worse of you for your confidence in them; serpents who lie in wait for doves. Won't you be on your guard against those who would betray you? Won't you doubt those who would contemn you for believing 'em? Take it from me, fair and natural dealing is to invite injuries; 'tis bleating to escape wolves who would devour you! Such is the world—[*Aside.*] and such (since the behaviour of one man to myself) have I believed all the rest of the sex.

Ind. I will not doubt the truth of Bevil, I will not doubt it. He has not spoke of it by an organ that is

given to lying. His eyes are all that have ever told me that he was mine. I know his virtue, I know his filial piety, and ought to trust his management with a father to whom he has uncommon obligations. What have I to be concerned for? my lesson is very short. If he takes me for ever, my purpose of life is only to please him. If he leaves me (which Heaven avert) I know he'll do it nobly, and I shall have nothing to do but to learn to die, after worse than death has happened to me.

Isab. Ay, do, persist in your credulity! flatter yourself that a man of his figure and fortune will make himself the jest of the town, and marry a handsome beggar for love.

Ind. The town! I must tell you, madam, the fools that laugh at Mr. Bevil will but make themselves more ridiculous; his actions are the result of thinking, and he has sense enough to make even virtue fashionable.

Isab. O' my conscience he has turned her head.—Come, come, if he were the honest fool you take him for, why has he kept you here these three weeks, without sending you to Bristol in search of your father, your family, and your relations?

Ind. I am convinced he still designs it, and that nothing keeps him here, but the necessity of coming to a breach with his father in regard to the match he has proposed him. Beside, has he not writ to Bristol? and has not he advice that my father has not been heard of there almost these twenty years?

Isab. All sham, mere evasion; he is afraid, if he should carry you thither, your honest relations may take you out of his hands, and so blow up all his wicked hopes at once.

Ind. Wicked hopes! did I ever give him any such?

Isab. Has he ever given you any honest ones? Can you say, in your conscience, he has ever once offered to marry you?

Ind. No! but by his behaviour I am convinced he will offer it, the moment 'tis in his power, or consistent with his honour, to make such a promise good to me.

Isab. His honour!

Ind. I will rely upon it; therefore desire you will not make my life uneasy, by these ungrateful jealousies of one, to whom I am, and wish to be, obliged. For from his integrity alone, I have resolved to hope for happiness.

Isab. Nay, I have done my duty; if you won't see, at your peril be it!

Ind. Let it be—This is his hour of visiting me.

Isab. Oh! to be sure, keep up your form; don't see him in a bed-chamber—[*Apart.*] This is pure prudence, when she is liable, wherever he meets her, to be conveyed where'er he pleases.

Ind. All the rest of my life is but waiting till he comes. I live only when I'm with him. [*Exit.*

Isab. Well, go thy ways, thou wilful innocent!—[*Aside.*] I once had almost as much love for a man, who poorly left me to marry an estate; and I am now, against my will, what they call an old maid—but I will not let the peevishness of that condition grow upon me, only keep up the suspicion of it, to prevent this creature's being any other than a virgin, except upon proper terms.

[*Exit.*

Re-enter INDIANA, *speaking to a Servant.*

Ind. Desire Mr. Bevil to walk in—Design! impossible! A base designing mind could never think of what he hourly puts in practice. And yet, since the late rumour of his marriage, he seems more reserved than formerly—he sends in too, before he sees me, to know if I am at leisure—such new respects may cover coldness in the heart; it certainly makes me thoughtful—I'll know the worst at once; I'll lay such fair occasions in his way,

that it shall be impossible to avoid an explanation, for these doubts are insupportable !—But see, he comes, and clears them all.

Enter BEVIL.

Bev. Madam, your most obedient—I am afraid I broke in upon your rest last night ; 'twas very late before we parted, but 'twas your own fault. I never saw you in such agreeable humour.

Ind. I am extremely glad we were both pleased ; for I thought I never saw you better company.

Bev. Me, madam ! you rally ; I said very little.

Ind. But I am afraid you heard me say a great deal ; and, when a woman is in the talking vein, the most agreeable thing a man can do, you know, is to have patience to hear her.

Bev. Then it's pity, madam, you should ever be silent, that we might be always agreeable to one another.

Ind. If I had your talent or power, to make my actions speak for me, I might indeed be silent, and you pretend to something more than the agreeable.

Bev. If I might be vain of anything in my power, madam, 'tis that my understanding, from all your sex, has marked you out as the most deserving object of my esteem.

Ind. Should I think I deserve this, 'twere enough to make my vanity forfeit the very esteem you offer me.

Bev. How so, madam ?

Ind. Because esteem is the result of reason, and to deserve it from good sense, the height of human glory. Nay, I had rather a man of honour should pay me that, than all the homage of a sincere and humble love.

Bev. Jun. You certainly distinguish right, madam ; love often kindles from external merit only.

Ind. But esteem rises from a higher source, the merit of the soul.

Bev. Jun. True—And great souls only can deserve it.
[*Bowing respectfully.*

Ind. Now I think they are greater still, that can so charitably part with it.

Bev. Jun. Now, madam, you make me vain, since the utmost pride and pleasure of my life is, that I esteem you as I ought.

Ind. [*Aside.*] As he ought! still more perplexing! he neither saves nor kills my hope.

Bev. Jun. But, madam, we grow grave, methinks. Let's find some other subject—Pray how did you like the opera last night?

Ind. First give me leave to thank you for my tickets.

Bev. Jun. Oh! your servant, madam. But pray tell me, you now, who are never partial to the fashion, I fancy must be the properest judge of a mighty dispute among the ladies, that is, whether *Crispo* or *Griselda*[1] is the more agreeable entertainment.

Ind. With submission now, I cannot be a proper judge of this question.

Bev. How so, madam?

Ind. Because I find I have a partiality for one of them.

Bev. Jun. Pray which is that?

Ind. I do not know; there's something in that rural cottage of Griselda, her forlorn condition, her poverty, her solitude, her resignation, her innocent slumbers, and that lulling *dolce sogno* that's sung over her; it had an effect upon me that—in short I never was so well deceived, at any of them.

Bev. Jun. Oh! Now then, I can account for the dispute. Griselda, it seems, is the distress of an injured

[1] These two operas, by G. B. Bononcini, were produced in 1722, with words by Rolli. In *Griselda*, Anastasia Robinson took the part of the heroine, and it is said that she thus completed her conquest of the Earl of Peterborough, who married her many years later.

innocent woman, Crispo, that only of a man in the same condition; therefore the men are mostly concerned for Crispo, and, by a natural indulgence, both sexes for Griselda.

Ind. So that judgment, you think, ought to be for one, though fancy and complaisance have got ground for the other. Well! I believe you will never give me leave to dispute with you on any subject; for I own, Crispo has its charms for me too. Though in the main, all the pleasure the best opera gives us is but mere sensation. Methinks it's pity the mind can't have a little more share in the entertainment. The music's certainly fine, but, in my thoughts, there's none of your composers come up to old Shakespeare and Otway.

Bev. How, madam! why if a woman of your sense were to say this in a drawing-room——

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, here's Signor Carbonelli[1] says he waits your commands in the next room.

Bev. Apropos! you were saying yesterday, madam, you had a mind to hear him. Will you give him leave to entertain you now?

Ind. By all means; desire the gentleman to walk in.

[*Exit* SERVANT.

Bev. I fancy you will find something in this hand that is uncommon.

Ind. You are always finding ways, Mr. Bevil, to make life seem less tedious to me.

Enter MUSIC MASTER.

When the gentleman pleases.

[*After a Sonata is played,* BEVIL *waits on the Master to the door, etc.*]

Bev. You smile, madam, to see me so complaisant to

[1] See page 270.

one whom I pay for his visit. Now, I own, I think it is not enough barely to pay those whose talents are superior to our own (I mean such talents as would become our condition, if we had them). Methinks we ought to do something more than barely gratify them for what they do at our command, only because their fortune is below us.

Ind. You say I smile. I assure you it was a smile of approbation; for, indeed, I cannot but think it the distinguishing part of a gentleman to make his superiority of fortune as easy to his inferiors as he can.—Now once more to try him. [*Aside.*]—I was saying just now, I believed you would never let me dispute with you, and I daresay it will always be so. However, I must have your opinion upon a subject which created a debate between my aunt and me, just before you came hither; she would needs have it that no man ever does any extraordinary kindness or service for a woman, but for his own sake.

Bev. Well, madam! Indeed I can't but be of her mind.

Ind. What, though he should maintain and support her, without demanding anything of her, on her part?

Bev. Why, madam, is making an expense in the service of a valuable woman (for such I must suppose her), though she should never do him any favour, nay, though she should never know who did her such service, such a mighty heroic business?

Ind. Certainly! I should think he must be a man of an uncommon mould.

Bev. Dear madam, why so? 'tis but, at best, a better taste in expense. To bestow upon one, whom he may think one of the ornaments of the whole creation, to be conscious, that from his superfluity, an innocent, a virtuous spirit is supported above the temptations and sorrows of life! That he sees satisfaction, health, and

gladness in her countenance, while he enjoys the happiness of seeing her (as that I will suppose too, or he must be too abstracted, too insensible), I say, if he is allowed to delight in that prospect; alas, what mighty matter is there in all this?

Ind. No mighty matter in so disinterested a friendship!

Bev. Disinterested! I can't think him so; your hero, madam, is no more than what every gentleman ought to be, and I believe very many are. He is only one who takes more delight in reflections than in sensations. He is more pleased with thinking than eating; that's the utmost you can say of him. Why, madam, a greater expense than all this, men lay out upon an unnecessary stable of horses.

Ind. Can you be sincere in what you say?

Bev. You may depend upon it, if you know any such man, he does not love dogs inordinately.

Ind. No, that he does not.

Bev. Nor cards, nor dice.

Ind. No.

Bev. Nor bottle companions.

Ind. No.

Bev. Nor loose women.

Ind. No, I'm sure he does not.

Bev. Take my word then, if your admired hero is not liable to any of these kind of demands, there's no such pre-eminence in this as you imagine. Nay, this way of expense you speak of is what exalts and raises him that has a taste for it; and, at the same time, his delight is incapable of satiety, disgust, or penitence.

Ind. But still I insist his having no private interest in the action, makes it prodigious, almost incredible.

Bev. Dear madam, I never knew you more mistaken. Why, who can be more a usurer than he who lays out his money in such valuable purchases? If pleasure be

worth purchasing, how great a pleasure is it to him, who has a true taste of life, to ease an aching heart; to see the human countenance lighted up into smiles of joy, on the receipt of a bit of ore which is superfluous and otherwise useless in a man's own pocket? What could a man do better with his cash? This is the effect of a human disposition, where there is only a general tie of nature and common necessity. What then must it be when we serve an object of merit, of admiration!

Ind. Well! the more you argue against it the more I shall admire the generosity.

Bev. Nay, nay—Then, madam, 'tis time to fly, after a declaration that my opinion strengthens my adversary's argument. I had best hasten to my appointment with Mr. Myrtle, and begone while we are friends, and before things are brought to an extremity. [*Exit, carelessly.*

Enter ISABELLA.

Isab. Well, madam, what think you of him now, pray?

Ind. I protest, I begin to fear he is wholly disinterested in what he does for me. On my heart, he has no other view but the mere pleasure of doing it, and has neither good or bad designs upon me.

Isab. Ah! dear niece! don't be in fear of both! I'll warrant you, you will know time enough that he is not indifferent.

Ind. You please me when you tell me so; for, if he has any wishes towards me, I know he will not pursue them but with honour.

Isab. I wish I were as confident of one as t'other. I saw the respectful downcast of his eye, when you caught him gazing at you during the music. He, I warrant, was surprised, as if he had been taken stealing your watch. Oh! the undissembled guilty look!

Ind. But did you observe any such thing, really? I thought he looked most charmingly graceful! How

engaging is modesty in a man, when one knows there is a great mind within. So tender a confusion! and yet, in other respects, so much himself, so collected, so dauntless, so determined!

Isab. Ah! niece! there is a sort of bashfulness which is the best engine to carry on a shameless purpose. Some men's modesty serves their wickedness, as hypocrisy gains the respect due to piety. But I will own to you, there is one hopeful symptom, if there could be such a thing as a disinterested lover. But it's all a perplexity—till—till—till——

Ind. Till what?

Isab. Till I know whether Mr. Myrtle and Mr. Bevil are really friends or foes.—And that I will be convinced of before I sleep; for you shall not be deceived.

Ind. I'm sure I never shall, if your fears can guard me. In the meantime I'll wrap myself up in the integrity of my own heart, nor dare to doubt of his.

As conscious honour all his actions steers,
So conscious innocence dispels my fears. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE.—SEALAND'S *House*.

Enter TOM, *meeting* PHILLIS.

TOM. Well, Phillis! What, with a face as if you had never seen me before! —What a work have I to do now? She has seen some new visitant at their house whose airs she has caught, and is resolved to practise them upon me. Numberless are the changes she'll dance through before she'll answer this plain question: videlicet, have you delivered my master's letter to your lady? Nay, I know her too well to ask an account of it in an ordinary way; I'll be in my airs as well as she. [*Aside.*]—Well, madam, as unhappy as you are at present pleased to make me, I would not, in the general, be any other than what I am. I would not be a bit wiser, a bit richer, a bit taller, a bit shorter than I am at this instant. [*Looking steadfastly at her.*

Phil. Did ever anybody doubt, Master Thomas, but that you were extremely satisfied with your sweet self?

Tom. I am, indeed. The thing I have least reason to be satisfied with is my fortune, and I am glad of my

[1] There is nothing in Terence's *Andria* to correspond to the incidents in this act; and throughout the remainder of the play there is no resemblance except the general idea of the story.

poverty. Perhaps if I were rich I should overlook the finest woman in the world, that wants nothing but riches to be thought so.

Phil. How prettily was that said! But I'll have a great deal more before I'll say one word. [*Aside.*

Tom. I should, perhaps, have been stupidly above her had I not been her equal; and by not being her equal, never had opportunity of being her slave. I am my master's servant for hire—I am my mistress's from choice, would she but approve my passion.

Phil. I think it's the first time I ever heard you speak of it with any sense of the anguish, if you really do suffer any.

Tom. Ah, Phillis! can you doubt, after what you have seen?

Phil. I know not what I have seen, nor what I have heard; but since I am at leisure, you may tell me when you fell in love with me; how you fell in love with me; and what you have suffered or are ready to suffer for me.

Tom. Oh, the unmerciful jade! when I am in haste about my master's letter. But I must go through it. [*Aside.*]—Ah![1] too well I remember when, and how, and

[1] Steele had already described this scene in the *Guardian* for June 20, 1713:—"I happened the other day to pass by a gentleman's house, and saw the most flippant scene of low love that I have ever observed. The maid was rubbing the windows within side of the house, and her humble servant the footman was so happy a man as to be employed in cleaning the same glass on the side towards the street. The wench began with the greatest severity of aspect imaginable, and breathing on the glass, followed it with a dry cloth; her opposite observed her, and fetching a deep sigh, as if it were his last, with a very disconsolate air did the same on his side of the window. He still worked on and languished, until at last his fair one smiled, but covered herself, and spreading the napkin in her hand, concealed herself from her admirer, while he took pains, as it were, to work through all that intercepted their meeting. This pretty contest held for four or five large panes of glass, until at last the waggery was turned into an humorous way of breathing in each other's faces, and catching the impression. The gay creatures were thus loving and pleasing their imaginations with their nearness and distance, until the windows were so

on what occasion I was first surprised. It was on the 1st of April, 1715, I came into Mr. Sealand's service; I was then a hobbledehoy, and you a pretty little tight girl, a favourite handmaid of the housekeeper. At that time we neither of us knew what was in us. I remember I was ordered to get out of the window, one pair of stairs, to rub the sashes clean; the person employed on the inner side was your charming self, whom I had never seen before.

Phil. I think I remember the silly accident. What made ye, you oaf, ready to fall down into the street?

Tom. You know not, I warrant you—you could not guess what surprised me. You took no delight when you immediately grew wanton in your conquest, and put your lips close, and breathed upon the glass, and when my lips approached, a dirty cloth you rubbed against my face, and hid your beauteous form! When I again drew near, you spit, and rubbed, and smiled at my undoing.

Phil. What silly thoughts you men have!

Tom. We were Pyramus and Thisbe—but ten times harder was my fate. Pyramus could peep only through a wall; I saw her, saw my Thisbe in all her beauty, but as much kept from her as if a hundred walls between—for there was more: there was her will against me. Would she but yet relent! O Phillis! Phillis! shorten my torment, and declare you pity me.

Phil. I believe it's very sufferable; the pain is not so exquisite but that you may bear it a little longer.

Tom. Oh! my charming Phillis, if all depended on my fair one's will, I could with glory suffer—but, dearest creature, consider our miserable state.

Phil. How! Miserable!

Tom. We are miserable to be in love, and under the

transparent that the beauty of the female made the man-servant impatient of beholding it, and the whole house besides being abroad, he ran in, and they romped out of my sight."

command of others than those we love; with that generous passion in the heart, to be sent to and fro on errands, called, checked, and rated for the meanest trifles. Oh, Phillis! you don't know how many china cups and glasses my passion for you has made me break. You have broke my fortune as well as my heart.

Phil. Well, Mr. Thomas, I cannot but own to you that I believe your master writes and you speak the best of any men in the world. Never was woman so well pleased with a letter as my young lady was with his; and this is an answer to it. [*Gives him a letter.*

Tom. This was well done, my dearest; consider, we must strike out some pretty livelihood for ourselves by closing their affairs. It will be nothing for them to give us a little being of our own, some small tenement, out of their large possessions. Whatever they give us, it will be more than what they keep for themselves. One acre with Phillis would be worth a whole county without her.

Phil. O, could I but believe you!

Tom. If not the utterance, believe the touch of my lips. [*Kisses her.*

Phil. There's no contradicting you. How closely you argue, Tom!

Tom. And will closer, in due time. But I must hasten with this letter, to hasten towards the possession of you. Then, Phillis, consider how I must be revenged, look to it, of all your skittishness, shy looks, and at best but coy compliances.

Phil. Oh, Tom, you grow wanton, and sensual, as my lady calls it; I must not endure it. Oh! foh! you are a man—an odious, filthy, male creature—you should behave, if you had a right sense or were a man of sense, like Mr. Cimberton, with distance and indifference; or, let me see, some other becoming hard word, with seeming in-in-inadvertency, and not rush on one as if you were seizing a prey.—But hush! the ladies are coming.—Good

Tom, don't kiss me above once, and be gone. Lard, we have been fooling and toying, and not considered the main business of our masters and mistresses.

Tom. Why, their business is to be fooling and toying as soon as the parchments are ready.

Phil. Well remembered, parchments; my lady, to my knowledge, is preparing writings between her coxcomb cousin, Cimberton, and my mistress, though my master has an eye to the parchments already prepared between your master, Mr. Bevil, and my mistress; and, I believe, my mistress herself has signed and sealed, in her heart, to Mr. Myrtle.—Did I not bid you kiss me but once, and be gone? But I know you won't be satisfied.

Tom. No, you smooth creature, how should I?

[*Kissing her hand.*

Phil. Well, since you are so humble, or so cool, as to ravish my hand only, I'll take my leave of you like a great lady, and you a man of quality.

[*They salute formally.*

Tom. Pox of all this state.

[*Offers to kiss her more closely.*

Phil. No, prithee, Tom, mind your business. We must follow that interest which will take, but endeavour at that which will be most for us, and we like most. Oh, here is my young mistress! [Tom *taps her neck behind, and kisses his fingers.*] Go, ye liquorish fool. [*Exit* Tom.

Enter Lucinda.

Luc. Who was that you were hurrying away?

Phil. One that I had no mind to part with.

Luc. Why did you turn him away then?

Phil. For your ladyship's service—to carry your ladyship's letter to his master. I could hardly get the rogue away.

Luc. Why, has he so little love for his master?

Phil. No; but he hath so much love for his mistress.

Luc. But I thought I heard him kiss you. Why did you suffer that?

Phil. Why, madam, we vulgar take it to be a sign of love—We servants, we poor people, that have nothing but our persons to bestow or treat for, are forced to deal and bargain by way of sample, and therefore as we have no parchments or wax necessary in our agreements, we squeeze with our hands and seal with our lips, to ratify vows and promises.

Luc. But can't you trust one another without such earnest down?

Phil. We don't think it safe, any more than you gentry, to come together without deeds executed.

Luc. Thou art a pert merry hussy.

Phil. I wish, madam, your lover and you were as happy as Tom and your servant are.

Luc. You grow impertinent.

Phil. I have done, madam; and I won't ask you what you intend to do with Mr. Myrtle, what your father will do with Mr. Bevil, nor what you all, especially my lady, mean by admitting Mr. Cimberton as particularly here as if he were married to you already; nay, you are married actually as far as people of quality are.

Luc. How is that?

Phil. You have different beds in the same house.

Luc. Pshaw! I have a very great value for Mr. Bevil, but have absolutely put an end to his pretensions in the letter I gave you for him. But my father, in his heart, still has a mind to him, were it not for this woman they talk of; and I am apt to imagine he is married to her, or never designs to marry at all.

Phil. Then Mr. Myrtle——

Luc. He had my parents' leave to apply to me, and by that he has won me and my affections; who is to have this body of mine without them, it seems, is nothing to me. My mother says 'tis indecent for me to let my

thoughts stray about the person of my husband; nay, she says a maid, rigidly virtuous, though she may have been where her lover was a thousand times, should not have made observations enough to know him from another man when she sees him in a third place.

Phil. That is more than the severity of a nun, for not to see when one may is hardly possible; not to see when one can't is very easy. At this rate, madam, there are a great many whom you have not seen who——

Luc. Mamma says the first time you see your husband should be at that instant he is made so. When your father, with the help of the minister, gives you to him, then you are to see him; then you are to observe and take notice of him; because then you are to obey him.

Phil. But does not my lady remember you are to love as well as obey?

Luc. To love is a passion, it is a desire, and we must have no desires.—Oh, I cannot endure the reflection! With what insensibility on my part, with what more than patience have I been exposed and offered to some awkward booby or other in every county of Great Britain!

Phil. Indeed, madam, I wonder I never heard you speak of it before with this indignation.

Luc. Every corner of the land has presented me with a wealthy coxcomb. As fast as one treaty has gone off, another has come on, till my name and person have been the tittle-tattle of the whole town. What is this world come to?—no shame left—to be bartered for like the beasts of the field, and that in such an instance as coming together to an entire familiarity and union of soul and body. Oh! and this without being so much as well-wishers to each other, but for increase of fortune.

Phil. But, madam, all these vexations will end very soon in one for all. Mr. Cimberton is your mother's kinsman, and three hundred years an older gentleman than any lover you ever had; for which reason, with that

of his prodigious large estate, she is resolved on him, and has sent to consult the lawyers accordingly; nay, has (whether you know it or no) been in treaty with Sir Geoffry, who, to join in the settlement, has accepted of a sum to do it, and is every moment expected in town for that purpose.

Luc. How do you get all this intelligence?

Phil. By an art I have, I thank my stars, beyond all the waiting-maids in Great Britain—the art of listening, madam, for your ladyship's service.

Luc. I shall soon know as much as you do; leave me, leave me, Phillis, begone. Here, here! I'll turn you out. My mother says I must not converse with my servants, though I must converse with no one else. [*Exit* PHIL.]—How unhappy are we who are born to great fortunes! No one looks at us with indifference, or acts towards us on the foot of plain dealing; yet, by all I have been heretofore offered to or treated for I have been used with the most agreeable of all abuses—flattery. But now, by this phlegmatic fool I'm used as nothing, or a mere thing. He, forsooth, is too wise, too learned to have any regard for desires, and I know not what the learned oaf calls sentiments of love and passion—Here he comes with my mother—It's much if he looks at me, or if he does, takes no more notice of me than of any other movable in the room.

Enter MRS. SEALAND, *and* MR. CIMBERTON.

Mrs. Seal. How do I admire this noble, this learned taste of yours, and the worthy regard you have to our own ancient and honourable house in consulting a means to keep the blood as pure and as regularly descended as may be.

Cim. Why, really, madam, the young women of this age are treated with discourses of such a tendency, and

their imaginations so bewildered in flesh and blood, that a man of reason can't talk to be understood. They have no ideas of happiness, but what are more gross than the gratification of hunger and thirst.

Luc. With how much reflection he is a coxcomb! [*Aside.*

Cim. And in truth, madam, I have considered it as a most brutal custom that persons of the first character in the world should go as ordinarily, and with as little shame, to bed as to dinner with one another. They proceed to the propagation of the species as openly as to the preservation of the individual.

Luc. She that willingly goes to bed to thee must have no shame, I'm sure. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Seal. Oh, cousin Cimberton! cousin Cimberton! how abstracted, how refined is your sense of things! But, indeed, it is too true there is nothing so ordinary as to say, in the best governed families, my master and lady have gone to bed; one does not know but it might have been said of one's self. [*Hiding her face with her fan.*

Cim. Lycurgus, madam, instituted otherwise; among the Lacedæmonians the whole female world was pregnant, but none but the mothers themselves knew by whom; their meetings were secret, and the amorous congress always by stealth; and no such professed doings between the sexes as are tolerated among us under the audacious word, marriage.

Mrs. Seal. Oh, had I lived in those days and been a matron of Sparta, one might with less indecency have had ten children, according to that modest institution, than one, under the confusion of our modern, barefaced manner.

Luc. And yet, poor woman, she has gone through the whole ceremony, and here I stand a melancholy proof of it. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Seal. We will talk then of business. That girl

walking about the room there is to be your wife. She has, I confess, no ideas, no sentiments, that speak her born of a thinking mother.

Cimb. I have observed her; her lively look, free air, and disengaged countenance speak her very——

Luc. Very what?

Cimb. If you please, madam—to set her a little that way.

Mrs. Seal. Lucinda, say nothing to him, you are not a match for him; when you are married, you may speak to such a husband when you're spoken to. But I am disposing of you above yourself every way.

Cimb. Madam, you cannot but observe the inconveniences I expose myself to, in hopes that your ladyship will be the consort of my better part. As for the young woman, she is rather an impediment than a help to a man of letters and speculation. Madam, there is no reflection, no philosophy, can at all times subdue the sensitive life, but the animal shall sometimes carry away the man. Ha! ay, the vermilion of her lips.

Luc. Pray, don't talk of me thus.

Cimb. The pretty enough—pant of her bosom.

Luc. Sir! madam, don't you hear him?

Cimb. Her forward chest.

Luc. Intolerable!

Cimb. High health.

Luc. The grave, easy impudence of him!

Cimb. Proud heart.

Luc. Stupid coxcomb!

Cimb. I say, madam, her impatience, while we are looking at her, throws out all attractions—her arms—her neck—what a spring in her step!

Luc. Don't you run me over thus, you strange unaccountable!

Cimb. What an elasticity in her veins and arteries!

Luc. I have no veins, no arteries.

Mrs. Seal. Oh, child! hear him, he talks finely; he's a scholar, he knows what you have.

Cimb. The speaking invitation of her shape, the gathering of herself up, and the indignation you see in the pretty little thing—Now, I am considering her, on this occasion, but as one that is to be pregnant.

Luc. The familiar, learned, unseasonable puppy! [*Aside.*

Cimb. And pregnant undoubtedly she will be yearly. I fear I shan't, for many years, have discretion enough to give her one fallow season.

Luc. Monster! there's no bearing it. The hideous sot! there's no enduring it, to be thus surveyed like a steed at sale.

Cimb. At sale! She's very illiterate—But she's very well limbed too; turn her in; I see what she is.

[*Exit* LUCINDA, *in a rage.*

Mrs. Seal. Go, you creature, I am ashamed of you.

Cimb. No harm done—you know, madam, the better sort of people, as I observed to you, treat by their lawyers of weddings [*Adjusting himself at the glass.*]—and the woman in the bargain, like the mansion house in the sale of the estate, is thrown in, and what that is, whether good or bad, is not at all considered.

Mrs. Seal. I grant it; and therefore make no demand for her youth and beauty, and every other accomplishment, as the common world think 'em, because she is not polite.

Cimb. Madam, I know your exalted understanding, abstracted, as it is, from vulgar prejudices, will not be offended, when I declare to you, I marry to have an heir to my estate, and not to beget a colony, or a plantation. This young woman's beauty and constitution will demand provision for a tenth child at least.

Mrs. Seal. With all that wit and learning, how considerate! What an economist! [*Aside.*]—Sir, I cannot

make her any other than she is; or say she is much better than the other young women of this age, or fit for much besides being a mother; but I have given directions for the marriage settlements, and Sir Geoffry Cimberton's counsel is to meet ours here, at this hour, concerning this joining in the deed, which, when executed, makes you capable of settling what is due to Lucinda's fortune. Herself, as I told you, I say nothing of.

Cimb. No, no, no, indeed, madam, it is not usual; and I must depend upon my own reflection and philosophy not to overstock my family.

Mrs. Seal. I cannot help her, cousin Cimberton; but she is, for aught I see, as well as the daughter of anybody else.

Cimb. That is very true, madam.

Enter a Servant, *who whispers* MRS. SEALAND.

Mrs. Seal. The lawyers are come, and now we are to hear what they have resolved as to the point whether it's necessary that Sir Geoffry should join in the settlement, as being what they call in the remainder. But, good cousin, you must have patience with 'em. These lawyers, I am told, are of a different kind; one is what they call a chamber counsel, the other a pleader. The conveyancer is slow, from an imperfection in his speech, and therefore shunned the bar, but extremely passionate and impatient of contradiction. The other is as warm as he; but has a tongue so voluble, and a head so conceited, he will suffer nobody to speak but himself.

Cimb. You mean old Serjeant Target and Counsellor Bramble? I have heard of 'em.

Mrs. Seal. The same. Show in the gentlemen.

[*Exit* Servant.

Re-enter Servant, *introducing* MYRTLE *and* TOM *disguised as* BRAMBLE *and* TARGET.

Mrs. Seal. Gentlemen, this is the party concerned,

Mr. Cimberton; and I hope you have considered of the matter.

Tar. Yes, madam, we have agreed that it must be by indent——dent——dent——dent——

Bram. Yes, madam, Mr. Serjeant and myself have agreed, as he is pleased to inform you, that it must be an indenture tripartite,[1] and tripartite let it be, for Sir Geoffry must needs be a party; old Cimberton, in the year 1619, says, in that ancient roll in Mr. Serjeant's hands, as recourse thereto being had, will more at large appear——

Tar. Yes, and by the deeds in your hands, it appears that——

Bram. Mr. Serjeant, I beg of you to make no inferences upon what is in our custody; but speak to the titles in your own deeds. I shall not show that deed till my client is in town.

Cimb. You know best your own methods.

Mrs. Seal. The single question is, whether the entail is such that my cousin, Sir Geoffry, is necessary in this affair?

Bram. Yes, as to the lordship of Tretriplet, but not as to the messuage of Grimgribber.

Tar. I say that Gr—gr— that Gr—gr—Grimgribber, Grimgribber is in us; that is to say the remainder thereof, as well as that of Tr—tr—Triplet.

Bram. You go upon the deed of Sir Ralph, made in the middle of the last century, precedent to that in which old Cimberton made over the remainder, and made it pass to the heirs general, by which your client comes in; and I question whether the remainder even of Tretriplet is in him—But we are willing to waive that, and give him a valuable consideration. But we shall not purchase

[1] Steele's monetary troubles made him personally familiar about the time he wrote this play with indentures tripartite, quadrupartite, and otherwise (See *Life of Steele*, 1889, II., 291, 299, &c.).

what is in us for ever, as Grimgribber is, at the rate, as we guard against the contingent of Mr. Cimberton having no son—Then we know Sir Geoffry is the first of the collateral male line in this family—yet——

Tar. Sir, Gr——gr——ber is——

Bram. I apprehend you very well, and your argument might be of force, and we would be inclined to hear that in all its parts—But, sir, I see very plainly what you are going into. I tell you, it is as probable a contingent that Sir Geoffry may die before Mr. Cimberton, as that he may outlive him.

Tar. Sir, we are not ripe for that yet, but I must say——

Bram. Sir, I allow you the whole extent of that argument; but that will go no farther than as to the claimants under old Cimberton. I am of opinion that, according to the instruction of Sir Ralph, he could not dock the entail, and then create a new estate for the heirs general.

Tar. Sir, I have not patience to be told that, when Gr——gr——ber——

Bram. I will allow it you, Mr. Serjeant; but there must be the word heirs for ever, to make such an estate as you pretend.

Cimb. I must be impartial, though you are counsel for my side of the question. Were it not that you are so good as to allow him what he has not said, I should think it very hard you should answer him without hearing him—But, gentlemen, I believe you have both considered this matter, and are firm in your different opinions. Twere better, therefore, you proceeded according to the particular sense of each of you, and gave your thoughts distinctly in writing. And do you see, sirs, pray let me have a copy of what you say in English.

Bram. Why, what is all we have been saying? In English! Oh! but I forgot myself, you're a wit. But,

however, to please you, sir, you shall have it, in as plain terms as the law will admit of.

Cimb. But I would have it, sir, without delay.

Bram. That, sir, the law will not admit of. The Courts are sitting at Westminster, and I am this moment obliged to be at every one of them, and 'twould be wrong if I should not be in the hall to attend one of 'em at least; the rest would take it ill else. Therefore, I must leave what I have said to Mr. Serjeant's consideration, and I will digest his arguments on my part, and you shall hear from me again, sir. [*Exit* BRAMBLE.

Tar. Agreed, agreed.

Cimb. Mr. Bramble is very quick; he parted a little abruptly.

Tar. He could not bear my argument; I pinched him to the quick about that Gr——gr——ber.

Mrs. Seal. I saw that, for he durst not so much as hear you. I shall send to you, Mr. Serjeant, as soon as Sir Geoffry comes to town, and then I hope all may be adjusted.

Tar. I shall be at my chambers, at my usual hours.

[*Exit.*

Cimb. Madam, if you please, I'll now attend you to the tea table, where I shall hear from your ladyship reason and good sense, after all this law and gibberish.

Mrs. Seal. 'Tis a wonderful thing, sir, that men of professions do not study to talk the substance of what they have to say in the language of the rest of the world. Sure, they'd find their account in it.

Cimb. They might, perhaps, madam, with people of your good sense; but with the generality 'twould never do. The vulgar would have no respect for truth and knowledge, if they were exposed to naked view.

Truth is too simple, of all art bereaved:
Since the world will—why let it be deceived.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—Bevil, Jun.'s *Lodgings*.[1]

Bevil, Jun., *with a letter in his hand, followed by* Tom.

TOM. Upon my life, sir, I know nothing of the matter. I never opened my lips to Mr. Myrtle about anything of your honour's letter to Madam Lucinda.

Bev. What's the fool in such a fright for? I don't suppose you did. What I would know is, whether Mr. Myrtle shows any suspicion, or asked you any questions, to lead you to say casually that you had carried any such letter for me this morning.

Tom. Why, sir, if he did ask me any questions, how could I help it?

Bev. I don't say you could, oaf! I am not questioning you, but him. What did he say to you?

Tom. Why, sir, when I came to his chambers, to be dressed for the lawyer's part your honour was pleased to put me upon, he asked me if I had been at Mr. Sealand's this morning? So I told him, sir, I often went thither—because, sir, if I had not said that he might have thought there was something more in my going now than at another time.

Bev. Very well!—The fellow's caution, I find, has given him this jealousy. [*Aside.*]—Did he ask you no other questions?

[1] This scene is, of course, entirely original.

Tom. Yes, sir; now I remember, as we came away in the hackney coach from Mr. Sealand's, Tom, says he, as I came in to your master this morning, he bade you go for an answer to a letter he had sent. Pray did you bring him any? says he. Ah! says I, sir, your honour is pleased to joke with me; you have a mind to know whether I can keep a secret or no?

Bev. And so, by showing him you could, you told him you had one?

Tom. Sir—— [*Confused.*

Bev. What mean actions does jealousy make a man stoop to! How poorly has he used art with a servant to make him betray his master!—Well! and when did he give you this letter for me?

Tom. Sir, he writ it before he pulled off his lawyer's gown, at his own chambers.

Bev. Very well; and what did he say when you brought him my answer to it?

Tom. He looked a little out of humour, sir, and said it was very well.

Bev. I knew he would be grave upon't; wait without.

Tom. Hum! 'gad, I don't like this; I am afraid we are all in the wrong box here. [*Exit* TOM.

Bev. I put on a serenity while my fellow was present; but I have never been more thoroughly disturbed. This hot man! to write me a challenge, on supposed artificial dealing, when I professed myself his friend! I can live contented without glory; but I cannot suffer shame. What's to be done? But first let me consider Lucinda's letter again. [*Reads.*

"SIR,

"I hope it is consistent with the laws a woman ought to impose upon herself, to acknowledge that your manner of declining a treaty of marriage in our family, and desiring the refusal may come from me, has some-

thing more engaging in it than the courtship of him who, I fear, will fall to my lot, except your friend exerts himself for our common safety and happiness. I have reasons for desiring Mr. Myrtle may not know of this letter till hereafter, and am your most obliged humble servant,

"LUCINDA SEALAND."

Well, but the postscript— [*Reads.*

"I won't, upon second thoughts, hide anything from you. But my reason for concealing this is, that Mr. Myrtle has a jealousy in his temper which gives me some terrors; but my esteem for him inclines me to hope that only an ill effect which sometimes accompanies a tender love, and what may be cured by a careful and unblamable conduct."

Thus has this lady made me her friend and confident, and put herself, in a kind, under my protection. I cannot tell him immediately the purport of her letter, except I could cure him of the violent and untractable passion of jealousy, and so serve him, and her, by disobeying her, in the article of secrecy, more than I should by complying with her directions.—But then this duelling, which custom has imposed upon every man who would live with reputation and honour in the world—how must I preserve myself from imputations there? He'll, forsooth, call it or think it fear, if I explain without fighting.—But his letter—I'll read it again—

"SIR,

"You have used me basely in corresponding and carrying on a treaty where you told me you were indifferent. I have changed my sword since I saw you; which advertisement I thought proper to send you against the next meeting between you and the injured

"CHARLES MYRTLE."

Enter TOM.

Tom. Mr. Myrtle, sir. Would your honour please to see him?

Bev. Why, you stupid creature! Let Mr. Myrtle wait at my lodgings! Show him up. [*Exit* TOM.] Well! I am resolved upon my carriage to him. He is in love, and in every circumstance of life a little distrustful, which I must allow for—but here he is.

Enter TOM, *introducing* MYRTLE.

Sir, I am extremely obliged to you for this honour. —[*To* TOM.] But, sir, you, with your very discerning face, leave the room. [*Exit* TOM.]—Well, Mr. Myrtle, your commands with me?

Myrt. The time, the place, our long acquaintance, and many other circumstances which affect me on this occasion, oblige me, without farther ceremony or conference, to desire you would not only, as you already have, acknowledge the receipt of my letter, but also comply with the request in it. I must have farther notice taken of my message than these half lines—"I have yours," "I shall be at home."

Bev. Sir, I own I have received a letter from you in a very unusual style; but as I design everything in this matter shall be your own action, your own seeking, I shall understand nothing but what you are pleased to confirm face to face, and I have already forgot the contents of your epistle.

Myrt. This cool manner is very agreeable to the abuse you have already made of my simplicity and frankness; and I see your moderation tends to your own advantage and not mine—to your own safety, not consideration of your friend.

Bev. My own safety, Mr. Myrtle?

Myrt. Your own safety, Mr. Bevil.

Bev. Look you, Mr. Myrtle, there's no disguising that

I understand what you would be at; but, sir, you know I have often dared to disapprove of the decisions a tyrant custom has introduced, to the breach of all laws, both divine and human.

Myrt. Mr. Bevil, Mr. Bevil, it would be a good first principle, in those who have so tender a conscience that way, to have as much abhorrence of doing injuries, as——

Bev. As what?

Myrt. As fear of answering for 'em.

Bev. As fear of answering for 'em! But that apprehension is just or blameable according to the object of that fear. I have often told you, in confidence of heart, I abhorred the daring to offend the Author of life, and rushing into his presence—I say, by the very same act, to commit the crime against Him, and immediately to urge on to His tribunal.

Myrt. Mr. Bevil, I must tell you, this coolness, this gravity, this show of conscience, shall never cheat me of my mistress. You have, indeed, the best excuse for life, the hopes of possessing Lucinda. But consider, sir, I have as much reason to be weary of it, if I am to lose her; and my first attempt to recover her shall be to let her see the dauntless man who is to be her guardian and protector.

Bev. Sir, show me but the least glimpse of argument, that I am authorised, by my own hand, to vindicate any lawless insult of this nature, and I will show thee—to chastise thee hardly deserves the name of courage—slight, inconsiderate man!—There is, Mr. Myrtle, no such terror in quick anger; and you shall, you know not why, be cool, as you have, you know not why, been warm.

Myrt. Is the woman one loves so little an occasion of anger? You perhaps, who know not what it is to love, who have your ready, your commodious, your foreign

trinket, for your loose hours; and from your fortune, your specious outward carriage, and other lucky circumstances, as easy a way to the possession of a woman of honour; you know nothing of what it is to be alarmed, to be distracted with anxiety and terror of losing more than life. Your marriage, happy man, goes on like common business, and in the interim you have your rambling captive, your Indian princess, for your soft moments of dalliance, your convenient, your ready Indiana.

Bev. You have touched me beyond the patience of a man; and I'm excusable, in the guard of innocence (or from the infirmity of human nature, which can bear no more), to accept your invitation, and observe your letter —Sir, I'll attend you.

Enter TOM.

Tom. Did you call, sir? I thought you did; I heard you speak aloud.

Bev. Yes; go call a coach.

Tom. Sir—master—Mr. Myrtle—friends—gentlemen —what d'ye mean? I am but a servant, or——

Bev. Call a coach. [*Exit* TOM.]—[*A long pause, walking sullenly by each other.*]—[*Aside.*] Shall I (though provoked to the uttermost) recover myself at the entrance of a third person, and that my servant too, and not have respect enough to all I have ever been receiving from infancy, the obligation to the best of fathers, to an unhappy virgin too, whose life depends on mine? [*Shutting the door.*]—[*To* MYRTLE.] I have, thank Heaven, had time to recollect myself, and shall not, for fear of what such a rash man as you think of me, keep longer unexplained the false appearances under which your infirmity of temper makes you suffer; when perhaps too much regard to a false point of honour makes me prolong that suffering.

Myrt. I am sure Mr. Bevil cannot doubt but I had rather have satisfaction from his innocence than his sword.

Bev. Why, then, would you ask it first that way?

Myrt. Consider, you kept your temper yourself no longer than till I spoke to the disadvantage of her you loved.

Bev. True; but let me tell you, I have saved you from the most exquisite distress, even though you had succeeded in the dispute. I know you so well, that I am sure to have found this letter about a man you had killed would have been worse than death to yourself—Read it.—[*Aside.*] When he is thoroughly mortified, and shame has got the better of jealousy, when he has seen himself throughly, he will deserve to be assisted towards obtaining Lucinda.

Myrt. With what a superiority has he turned the injury on me, as the aggressor? I begin to fear I have been too far transported—A treaty in our family! is not that saying too much? I shall relapse.—But I find (on the postscript) something like jealousy. With what face can I see my benefactor, my advocate, whom I have treated like a betrayer? [*Aside.*]—Oh! Bevil, with what words shall I——

Bev. There needs none; to convince is much more than to conquer.

Myrt. But can you——

Bev. You have o'erpaid the inquietude you gave me, in the change I see in you towards me. Alas! what machines are we! thy face is altered to that of another man; to that of my companion, my friend.

Myrt. That I could be such a precipitant wretch!

Bev. Pray, no more.

Myrt. Let me reflect how many friends have died, by the hands of friends, for want of temper; and you must give me leave to say again, and again, how much I am

beholden to that superior spirit you have subdued me with. What had become of one of us, or perhaps both, had you been as weak as I was, and as incapable of reason?

Bev. I congratulate to us both the escape from ourselves, and hope the memory of it will make us dearer friends than ever.

Myrt. Dear Bevil, your friendly conduct has convinced me that there is nothing manly but what is conducted by reason, and agreeable to the practice of virtue and justice. And yet how many have been sacrificed to that idol, the unreasonable opinion of men! Nay, they are so ridiculous in it, that they often use their swords against each other with dissembled anger and real fear.

Betrayed by honour, and compelled by shame,
They hazard being, to preserve a name:
Nor dare inquire into the dread mistake,
Till plunged in sad eternity they wake. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*St. James's Park.*

Enter SIR JOHN BEVIL *and* MR. SEALAND.

Sir J. Bev. Give me leave, however, Mr. Sealand, as we are upon a treaty for uniting our families, to mention only the business of an ancient house. Genealogy and descent are to be of some consideration in an affair of this sort.

Mr. Seal. Genealogy and descent! Sir, there has been in our family a very large one. There was Galfrid the father of Edward, the father of Ptolomey, the father of Crassus, the father of Earl Richard, the father of Henry the Marquis, the father of Duke John.

Sir J. Bev. What, do you rave, Mr. Sealand? all these great names in your family?

Mr. Seal. These? yes, sir. I have heard my father name 'em all, and more.

Sir J. Bev. Ay, sir? and did he say they were all in your family?

Mr. Seal. Yes, sir, he kept 'em all. He was the greatest cocker[1] in England. He said Duke John won him many battles, and never lost one.

Sir J. Bev. Oh, sir, your servant! you are laughing at my laying any stress upon descent; but I must tell you, sir, I never knew anyone but he that wanted that advantage turn it into ridicule.

Mr. Seal. And I never knew any one who had many better advantages put that into his account.—But, Sir John, value yourself as you please upon your ancient house, I am to talk freely of everything you are pleased to put into your bill of rates on this occasion; yet, sir, I have made no objections to your son's family. 'Tis his morals that I doubt.

Sir J. Bev. Sir, I can't help saying, that what might injure a citizen's credit may be no stain to a gentleman's honour.

Mr. Seal. Sir John, the honour of a gentleman is liable to be tainted by as small a matter as the credit of a trader. We are talking of a marriage, and in such a case, the father of a young woman will not think it an addition to the honour or credit of her lover that he is a keeper——

Sir J. Bev. Mr. Sealand, don't take upon you to spoil my son's marriage with any woman else.

Mr. Seal. Sir John, let him apply to any woman else, and have as many mistresses as he pleases.

Sir J. Bev. My son, sir, is a discreet and sober gentleman.

[1] Patron of cock-fighting.

Mr. Seal. Sir, I never saw a man that wenched soberly and discreetly, that ever left it off; the decency observed in the practice hides, even from the sinner, the iniquity of it. They pursue it, not that their appetites hurry 'em away, but, I warrant you, because 'tis their opinion they may do it.

Sir J. Bev. Were what you suspect a truth—do you design to keep your daughter a virgin till you find a man unblemished that way?

Mr. Seal. Sir, as much a cit as you take me for, I know the town and the world; and give me leave to say, that we merchants are a species of gentry that have grown into the world this last century, and are as honourable, and almost as useful, as you landed folks, that have always thought yourselves so much above us; for your trading, forsooth, is extended no farther than a load of hay or a fat ox. You are pleasant people, indeed, because you are generally bred up to be lazy; therefore, I warrant you, industry is dishonourable.

Sir J. Bev. Be not offended, sir; let us go back to our point.

Mr. Seal. Oh! not at all offended; but I don't love to leave any part of the account unclosed. Look you, Sir John, comparisons are odious, and more particularly so on occasions of this kind, when we are projecting races that are to be made out of both sides of the comparisons.

Sir J. Bev. But, my son, sir, is, in the eye of the world, a gentleman of merit.

Mr. Seal. I own to you, I think him so.—But, Sir John, I am a man exercised and experienced in chances and disasters. I lost, in my earlier years, a very fine wife, and with her a poor little infant. This makes me, perhaps, over cautious to preserve the second bounty of providence to me, and be as careful as I can of this

child. You'll pardon me, my poor girl, sir, is as valuable to me as your boasted son to you.

Sir J. Bev. Why, that's one very good reason, Mr. Sealand, why I wish my son had her.

Mr. Seal. There is nothing but this strange lady here, this *incognita*, that can be objected to him. Here and there a man falls in love with an artful creature, and gives up all the motives of life to that one passion.

Sir J. Bev. A man of my son's understanding cannot be supposed to be one of them.

Mr. Seal. Very wise men have been so enslaved; and, when a man marries with one of them upon his hands, whether moved from the demand of the world or slighter reasons, such a husband soils with his wife for a month perhaps—then good be w'ye, madam, the show's over—Ah! John Dryden points out such a husband to a hair, where he says,—

> "And while abroad so prodigal the dolt is,
> Poor spouse at home as ragged as a colt is."

Now, in plain terms, sir, I shall not care to have my poor girl turned a-grazing, and that must be the case when——

Sir J. Bev. But pray consider, sir, my son——

Mr. Seal. Look you, sir, I'll make the matter short. This unknown lady, as I told you, is all the objection I have to him; but, one way or other, he is, or has been, certainly engaged to her. I am therefore resolved, this very afternoon, to visit her. Now from her behaviour, or appearance, I shall soon be let into what I may fear or hope for.

Sir J. Bev. Sir, I am very confident there can be nothing inquired into relating to my son, that will not, upon being understood, turn to his advantage.

Mr. Seal. I hope that as sincerely as you believe it.

—Sir John Bevil, when I am satisfied, in this great point, if your son's conduct answers the character you give him, I shall wish your alliance more than that of any gentleman in Great Britain; and so your servant.

[*Exit.*

Sir J. Bev. He is gone in a way but barely civil; but his great wealth, and the merit of his only child, the heiress of it, are not to be lost for a little peevishness.

Enter HUMPHRY.

Oh! Humphry, you are come in a seasonable minute. I want to talk to thee, and to tell thee that my head and heart are on the rack about my son.

Humph. Sir, you may trust his discretion; I am sure you may.

Sir J. Bev. Why, I do believe I may, and yet I'm in a thousand fears when I lay this vast wealth before me; when I consider his prepossessions, either generous to a folly, in an honourable love, or abandoned, past redemption, in a vicious one; and, from the one or the other, his insensibility to the fairest prospect towards doubling our estate: a father, who knows how useful wealth is, and how necessary, even to those who despise it—I say a father, Humphry, a father cannot bear it.

Humph. Be not transported, sir; you will grow incapable of taking any resolution in your perplexity.

Sir J. Bev. Yet, as angry as I am with him, I would not have him surprised in anything. This mercantile rough man may go grossly into the examination of this matter, and talk to the gentlewoman so as to——

Humph. No, I hope, not in an abrupt manner.

Sir J. Bev. No, I hope not! Why, dost thou know anything of her, or of him, or of anything of it, or all of it?

Humph. My dear master, I know so much that I told

him this very day you had reason to be secretly out of humour about her.

Sir J. Bev. Did you go so far? Well, what said he to that?

Humph. His words were, looking upon me steadfastly: "Humphry," says he, "that woman is a woman of honour."

Sir J. Bev. How! Do you think he is married to her, or designs to marry her?

Humph. I can say nothing to the latter; but he says he can marry no one without your consent while you are living.

Sir J. Bev. If he said so much, I know he scorns to break his word with me.

Humph. I am sure of that.

Sir J. Bev. You are sure of that—well! that's some comfort. Then I have nothing to do but to see the bottom of this matter during this present ruffle—Oh, Humphry——

Humph. You are not ill, I hope, sir.

Sir J. Bev. Yes, a man is very ill that's in a very ill-humour. To be a father is to be in care for one whom you oftener disoblige than please by that very care—Oh! that sons could know the duty to a father before they themselves are fathers—But, perhaps, you'll say now that I am one of the happiest fathers in the world; but, I assure you, that of the very happiest is not a condition to be envied.

Humph. Sir, your pain arises, not from the thing itself, but your particular sense of it. You are overfond, nay, give me leave to say, you are unjustly apprehensive from your fondness. My master Bevil never disobliged you, and he will, I know he will, do everything you ought to expect.

Sir J. Bev. He won't take all this money with this girl—For ought I know, he will, forsooth, have so much

moderation as to think he ought not to force his liking for any consideration.

Humph. He is to marry her, not you; he is to live with her, not you, sir.

Sir J. Bev. I know not what to think. But, I know, nothing can be more miserable than to be in this doubt —Follow me; I must come to some resolution.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—BEVIL, JUN.'S *Lodgings.*

Enter TOM *and* PHILLIS.

Tom. Well, madam, if you must speak with Mr. Myrtle, you shall; he is now with my master in the library.

Phil. But you must leave me alone with him, for he can't make me a present, nor I so handsomely take anything from him before you; it would not be decent.

Tom. It will be very decent, indeed, for me to retire, and leave my mistress with another man.

Phil. He is a gentleman, and will treat one properly.

Tom. I believe so; but, however, I won't be far off, and therefore will venture to trust you. I'll call him to you. [*Exit* TOM.

Phil. What a deal of pother and sputter here is between my mistress and Mr. Myrtle from mere punctilio! I could, any hour of the day, get her to her lover, and would do it—but she, forsooth, will allow no plot to get him; but, if he can come to her, I know she would be glad of it. I must, therefore, do her an acceptable violence, and surprise her into his arms. I am sure I go by the best rule imaginable. If she were my maid, I should think her the best servant in the world for doing so by me.

Enter MYRTLE *and* TOM.

Oh sir! You and Mr. Bevil are fine gentlemen to let a lady remain under such difficulties as my poor mistress, and no attempt to set her at liberty, or release her from the danger of being instantly married to Cimberton.

Myrt. Tom has been telling——But what is to be done?

Phil. What is to be done—when a man can't come at his mistress! Why, can't you fire our house, or the next house to us, to make us run out, and you take us?

Myrt. How, Mrs. Phillis?

Phil. Ay; let me see that rogue deny to fire a house, make a riot, or any other little thing, when there were no other way to come at me.

Tom. I am obliged to you, madam.

Phil. Why, don't we hear every day of people's hanging themselves for love, and won't they venture the hazard of being hanged for love? Oh! were I a man——

Myrt. What manly thing would you have me undertake, according to your ladyship's notion of a man?

Phil. Only be at once what, one time or other, you may be, and wish to be, or must be.

Myrt. Dear girl, talk plainly to me, and consider I, in my condition, can't be in very good humour—you say, to be at once what I must be.

Phil. Ay, ay; I mean no more than to be an old man; I saw you do it very well at the masquerade. In a word, old Sir Geoffry Cimberton is every hour expected in town, to join in the deeds and settlements for marrying Mr. Cimberton. He is half blind, half lame, half deaf, half dumb; though, as to his passions and desires, he is as warm and ridiculous as when in the heat of youth.

Tom. Come to the business, and don't keep the

gentleman in suspense for the pleasure of being courted, as you serve me.

Phil. I saw you at the masquerade act such a one to perfection. Go, and put on that very habit, and come to our house as Sir Geoffry. There is not one there but myself knows his person; I was born in the parish where he is Lord of the Manor. I have seen him often and often at church in the country. Do not hesitate, but come hither; they will think you bring a certain security against Mr. Myrtle, and you bring Mr. Myrtle. Leave the rest to me; I leave this with you, and expect —They don't, I told you, know you; they think you out of town, which you had as good be for ever, if you lose this opportunity—I must be gone; I know I am wanted at home.

Myrt. My dear Phillis! [*Catches and kisses her, and gives her money.*

Phil. O fie! my kisses are not my own; you have committed violence; but I'll carry 'em to the right owner. [Tom *kisses her.*]—Come, see me downstairs [*To* Tom.], and leave the lover to think of his last game for the prize. [*Exeunt* Tom *and* Phillis.

Myrt. I think I will instantly attempt this wild expedient. The extravagance of it will make me less suspected, and it will give me opportunity to assert my own right to Lucinda, without whom I cannot live. But I am so mortified at this conduct of mine towards poor Bevil. He must think meanly of me—I know not how to reassume myself, and be in spirit enough for such an adventure as this; yet I must attempt it, if it be only to be near Lucinda under her present perplexities; and sure——

The next delight to transport, with the fair,
Is to relieve her in her hours of care. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—Sealand's *House*.

Enter Phillis, *with lights, before* Myrtle, *disguised like old* Sir Geoffry; *supported by* Mrs. Sealand, Lucinda, *and* Cimberton.

MRS. SEAL. Now I have seen you thus far, Sir Geoffry, will you excuse me a moment while I give my necessary orders for your accommodation? [*Exit* Mrs. Seal.

Myrt. I have not seen you, cousin Cimberton, since you were ten years old; and as it is incumbent on you to keep up our name and family, I shall, upon very reasonable terms, join with you in a settlement to that purpose. Though I must tell you, cousin, this is the first merchant that has married into our house.

Luc. Deuce on 'em! am I a merchant because my father is? [*Aside.*

Myrt. But is he directly a trader at this time?

Cimb. There's no hiding the disgrace, sir; he trades to all parts of the world.

Myrt. We never had one of our family before who descended from persons that did anything.

Cimb. Sir, since it is a girl that they have, I am, for

the honour of my family, willing to take it in again, and to sink her into our name, and no harm done.

Myrt. 'Tis prudently and generously resolved—Is this the young thing?

Cimb. Yes, sir.

Phil. Good madam, don't be out of humour, but let them run to the utmost of their extravagance.—Hear them out. [*To* LUC.

Myrt. Can't I see her nearer? My eyes are but weak.

Phil. Beside, I am sure the uncle has something worth your notice. I'll take care to get off the young one, and leave you to observe what may be wrought out of the old one for your good. [*To* LUC. *Exit.*

Cimb. Madam, this old gentleman, your great uncle, desires to be introduced to you, and to see you nearer! —Approach, sir.

Myrt. By your leave, young lady. [*Puts on spectacles.*]—Cousin Cimberton! She has exactly that sort of neck and bosom for which my sister Gertrude was so much admired in the year sixty-one, before the French dresses first discovered anything in women below the chin.

Luc. [*Aside.*] What a very odd situation am I in! though I cannot but be diverted at the extravagance of their humours, equally unsuitable to their age—Chin, quotha—I don't believe my passionate lover there knows whether I have one or not. Ha! ha!

Myrt. Madam, I would not willingly offend, but I have a better glass. [*Pulls out a large one.*

Enter PHILLIS.

Phil. [*To* CIMBERTON.] Sir, my lady desires to show the apartment to you that she intends for Sir Geoffry.

Cimb. Well, sir! by that time you will have sufficiently gazed and sunned yourself in the beauties of my spouse there.—I will wait on you again. [*Exit* CIMB. *and* PHIL.

Myrt. Were it not, madam, that I might be troublesome, there is something of importance, though we are alone, which I would say more safe from being heard.

Luc. There is something in this old fellow, methinks, that raises my curiosity. [*Aside.*

Myrt. To be free, madam, I as heartily contemn this kinsman of mine as you do, and am sorry to see so much beauty and merit devoted by your parents to so insensible a possessor.

Luc. Surprising!—I hope, then, sir, you will not contribute to the wrong you are so generous as to pity, whatever may be the interest of your family.

Myrt. This hand of mine shall never be employed to sign anything against your good and happiness.

Luc. I am sorry, sir, it is not in my power to make you proper acknowledgments; but there is a gentleman in the world whose gratitude will, I am sure, be worthy of the favour.

Myrt. All the thanks I desire, madam, are in your power to give.

Luc. Name them and command them.

Myrt. Only, madam, that the first time you are alone with your lover, you will, with open arms, receive him.

Luc. As willingly as his heart could wish it.

Myrt. Thus, then, he claims your promise. O Lucinda!

Luc. Oh! a cheat! a cheat! a cheat!

Myrt. Hush! 'tis I, 'tis I, your lover, Myrtle himself, madam.

Luc. O bless me! what a rashness and folly to surprise me so—But hush—my mother.

Enter MRS. SEALAND, CIMBERTON, *and* PHILLIS.

Mrs. Seal. How now! what's the matter?

Luc. O madam! as soon as you left the room my

uncle fell into a sudden fit, and—and—so I cried out for help to support him and conduct him to his chamber.

Mrs. Seal. That was kindly done! Alas! sir, how do you find yourself?

Myrt. Never was taken in so odd a way in my life—pray lead me! Oh! I was talking here—(pray carry me)—to my cousin Cimberton's young lady.

Mrs. Seal. [*Aside.*] My cousin Cimberton's young lady! How zealous he is, even in his extremity, for the match! A right Cimberton.

[CIMBERTON *and* LUCINDA *lead him, as one in pain.*

Cimb. Pox! Uncle, you will pull my ear off.

Luc. Pray, uncle! you will squeeze me to death.

Mrs. Seal. No matter, no matter—he knows not what he does.—Come, sir, shall I help you out?

Myrt. By no means! I'll trouble nobody but my young cousins here. [*They lead him off.*

Phil. But pray, madam, does your ladyship intend that Mr. Cimberton shall really marry my young mistress at last? I don't think he likes her.

Mrs. Seal. That's not material! Men of his speculation are above desires—but be as it may. Now I have given old Sir Geoffry the trouble of coming up to sign and seal, with what countenance can I be off?

Phil. As well as with twenty others, madam. It is the glory and honour of a great fortune to live in continual treaties, and still to break off: it looks great, madam.

Mrs. Seal. True, Phillis—yet to return our blood again into the Cimbertons is an honour not to be rejected—But were not you saying that Sir John Bevil's creature, Humphry, has been with Mr. Sealand?

Phil. Yes, madam; I overheard them agree that Mr. Sealand should go himself and visit this unknown lady that Mr. Bevil is so great with; and if he found nothing

there to fright him, that Mr. Bevil should still marry my young mistress.

Mrs. Seal. How! nay, then, he shall find she is my daughter as well as his. I'll follow him this instant, and take the whole family along with me. The disputed power of disposing of my own daughter shall be at an end this very night. I'll live no longer in anxiety for a little hussy that hurts my appearance wherever I carry her: and for whose sake I seem to be at all regarded, and that in the best of my days.

Phil. Indeed, madam, if she were married, your ladyship might very well be taken for Mr. Sealand's daughter.

Mrs. Seal. Nay, when the chit has not been with me, I have heard the men say as much. I'll no longer cut off the greatest pleasure of a woman's life (the shining in assemblies) by her forward anticipation of the respect that's due to her superior. She shall down to Cimberton-Hall—she shall—she shall.

Phil. I hope, madam, I shall stay with your ladyship.

Mrs. Seal. Thou shalt, Phillis, and I'll place thee then more about me—But order chairs immediately; I'll be gone this minute. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Charing Cross.*

Enter MR. SEALAND *and* HUMPHRY.

Mr. Seal. I am very glad, Mr. Humphry, that you agree with me that it is for our common good I should look thoroughly into this matter.

Humph. I am, indeed, of that opinion; for there is no artifice,nothing concealed, in our family, which ought in justice to be known. I need not desire you, sir, to treat the lady with care and respect.

Mr. Seal. Master Humphry, I shall not be rude, though I design to be a little abrupt, and come into the matter at once, to see how she will bear upon a surprise.

Humph. That's the door, sir; I wish you success.—[*While* HUMPHRY *speaks*, SEALAND *consults his table book.*]—I am less concerned what happens there, because I hear Mr. Myrtle is well lodged as old Sir Geoffry; so I am willing to let this gentleman employ himself here, to give them time at home; for I am sure 'tis necessary for the quiet of our family Lucinda were disposed of out of it, since Mr. Bevil's inclination is so much otherwise engaged. [*Exit.*

Mr. Seal. I think this is the door. [*Knocks.*] I'll carry this matter with an air of authority, to inquire, though I make an errand, to begin discourse. [*Knocks again, and enter a foot-boy.*] So young man! is your lady within?

Boy. Alack, sir! I am but a country boy—I dant know whether she is or noa; but an you'll stay a bit, I'll goa and ask the gentlewoman that's with her.

Mr. Seal. Why, sirrah, though you are a country boy, you can see, can't you? You know whether she is at home, when you see her, don't you?

Boy. Nay, nay, I'm not such a country lad neither, master, to think she's at home because I see her. I have been in town but a month, and I lost one place already for believing my own eyes.

Mr. Seal. Why, sirrah! have you learnt to lie already?

Boy. Ah, master! things that are lies in the country are not lies at London. I begin to know my business a little better than so—But an you please to walk in, I'll call a gentlewoman to you that can tell you for certain—she can make bold to ask my lady herself.

Mr. Seal. Oh! then, she is within, I find, though you dare not say so.

Boy. Nay, nay! that's neither here nor there: what's

matter whether she is within or no, if she has not a mind to see anybody?

Mr. Seal. I can't tell, sirrah, whether you are arch or simple; but, however, get me a direct answer, and here's a shilling for you.

Boy. Will you please to walk in; I'll see what I can do for you.

Mr. Seal. I see you will be fit for your business in time, child; but I expect to meet with nothing but extraordinaries in such a house.

Boy. Such a house! Sir, you han't seen it yet. Pray walk in.

Mr. Seal. Sir, I'll wait upon you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—INDIANA'S *House.*

Enter ISABELLA.

Isab. What anxiety do I feel for this poor creature! What will be the end of her? Such a languishing unreserved passion for a man that at last must certainly leave or ruin her! and perhaps both! Then the aggravation of the distress is, that she does not believe he will—not but, I must own, if they are both what they would seem, they are made for one another, as much as Adam and Eve were, for there is no other of their kind but themselves.

Enter BOY.

So, Daniel! what news with you?

Boy. Madam, there's a gentleman below would speak with my lady.

Isab. Sirrah! don't you know Mr. Bevil yet?

Boy. Madam, 'tis not the gentleman who comes every day, and asks for you, and won't go in till he knows whether you are with her or no.

Isab. Ha! that's a particular I did not know before. Well! be it who it will, let him come up to me.

[*Exit* BOY; *and re-enters with* MR. SEALAND; ISABELLA *looks amazed.*

Mr. Seal. Madam, I can't blame your being a little surprised to see a perfect stranger make a visit, and——

Isab. I am indeed surprised!—I see he does not know me. [*Aside.*

Mr. Seal. You are very prettily lodged here, madam; in troth you seem to have everything in plenty—A thousand a year, I warrant you, upon this pretty nest of rooms, and the dainty one within them.

[*Aside, and looking about.*

Isab. [*Apart.*] Twenty years, it seems, have less effect in the alteration of a man of thirty than of a girl of fourteen—he's almost still the same; but alas! I find, by other men, as well as himself, I am not what I was. As soon as he spoke, I was convinced 'twas he; how shall I contain my surprise and satisfaction! He must not know me yet.

Mr. Seal. Madam, I hope I don't give you any disturbance; but there is a young lady here with whom I have a particular business to discourse, and I hope she will admit me to that favour.

Isab. Why, sir, have you had any notice concerning her? I wonder who could give it you.

Mr. Seal. That, madam, is fit only to be communicated to herself.

Isab. Well, sir! you shall see her.—[*Aside.*] I find he knows nothing yet, nor shall from me. I am resolved I will observe this interlude, this sport of nature and of fortune.—You shall see her presently, sir; for now I am as a mother, and will trust her with you. [*Exit.*

Mr. Seal. As a mother! right; that's the old phrase for one of those commode ladies, who lend out beauty for hire to young gentlemen that have pressing occasions.

But here comes the precious lady herself. In troth a very sightly woman——

Enter INDIANA.

Ind. I am told, sir, you have some affair that requires your speaking with me.

Mr. Seal. Yes, madam, there came to my hands a bill drawn by Mr. Bevil, which is payable to-morrow; and he, in the intercourse of business, sent it to me, who have cash of his, and desired me to send a servant with it; but I have made bold to bring you the money myself.

Ind. Sir! was that necessary?

Mr. Seal. No, madam; but to be free with you, the fame of your beauty, and the regard which Mr. Bevil is a little too well known to have for you, excited my curiosity.

Ind. Too well known to have for me! Your sober appearance, sir, which my friend described, made me expect no rudeness, or absurdity, at least——Who's there?—Sir, if you pay the money to a servant, 'twill be as well.

Mr. Seal. Pray, madam, be not offended; I came hither on an innocent, nay, a virtuous design; and, if you will have patience to hear me, it may be as useful to you, as you are in a friendship with Mr. Bevil, as to my only daughter, whom I was this day disposing of.

Ind. You make me hope, sir, I have mistaken you. I am composed again; be free, say on—[*Aside.*]—what I am afraid to hear.

Mr. Seal. I feared, indeed, an unwarranted passion here, but I did not think it was in abuse of so worthy an object, so accomplished a lady as your sense and mien bespeak; but the youth of our age care not what merit and virtue they bring to shame, so they gratify——

Ind. Sir, you are going into very great errors; but as

you are pleased to say you see something in me that has changed at least the colour of your suspicions, so has your appearance altered mine, and made me earnestly attentive to what has any way concerned you to inquire into my affairs and character.

Mr. Seal. How sensibly, with what an air she talks!

Ind. Good sir, be seated, and tell me tenderly; keep all your suspicions concerning me alive, that you may in a proper and prepared way acquaint me why the care of your daughter obliges a person of your seeming worth and fortune to be thus inquisitive about a wretched, helpless, friendless——[*Weeping.*] But I beg your pardon; though I am an orphan, your child is not; and your concern for her, it seems, has brought you hither.—I'll be composed; pray go on, sir.

Mr. Seal. How could Mr. Bevil be such a monster, to injure such a woman?

Ind. No, sir, you wrong him; he has not injured me. My support is from his bounty.

Mr. Seal. Bounty! when gluttons give high prices for delicates, they are prodigious bountiful.

Ind. Still, still you will persist in that error. But my own fears tell me all. You are the gentleman, I suppose, for whose happy daughter he is designed a husband by his good father, and he has, perhaps, consented to the overture. He was here this morning, dressed beyond his usual plainness—nay, most sumptuously—and he is to be, perhaps, this night a bridegroom.

Mr. Seal. I own he was intended such; but, madam, on your account, I have determined to defer my daughter's marriage till I am satisfied from your own mouth of what nature are the obligations you are under to him.

Ind. His actions, sir; his eyes have only made me think he designed to make me the partner of his heart. The goodness and gentleness of his demeanour made me

misinterpret all. 'Twas my own hope, my own passion, that deluded me; he never made one amorous advance to me. His large heart, and bestowing hand, have only helped the miserable; nor know I why, but from his mere delight in virtue, that I have been his care and the object on which to indulge and please himself with pouring favours.

Mr. Seal. Madam, I know not why it is, but I, as well as you, am methinks afraid of entering into the matter I came about; but 'tis the same thing as if we had talked never so distinctly——he ne'er shall have a daughter of mine.

Ind. If you say this from what you think of me, you wrong yourself and him. Let not me, miserable though I may be, do injury to my benefactor. No, sir, my treatment ought rather to reconcile you to his virtues. If to bestow without a prospect of return; if to delight in supporting what might, perhaps, be thought an object of desire, with no other view than to be her guard against those who would not be so disinterested; if these actions, sir, can in a careful parent's eye commend him to a daughter, give yours, sir, give her to my honest, generous Bevil. What have I to do but sigh, and weep, and rave, run wild, a lunatic in chains, or, hid in darkness, mutter in distracted starts and broken accents my strange, strange story!

Mr. Seal. Take comfort, madam.

Ind. All my comfort must be to expostulate in madness, to relieve with frenzy my despair, and shrieking to demand of fate why—why was I born to such variety of sorrows.

Mr. Seal. If I have been the least occasion——

Ind. No, 'twas Heaven's high will I should be such; to be plundered in my cradle! tossed on the seas! and even there an infant captive! to lose my mother, hear but of

my father!' to be adopted! lose my adopter! then plunged again into worse calamities!

Mr. Seal. An infant captive!

Ind. Yet then, to find the most charming of mankind, once more to set me free from what I thought the last distress, to load me with his services, his bounties, and his favours; to support my very life in a way that stole, at the same time, my very soul itself from me.

Mr. Seal. And has young Bevil been this worthy man?

Ind. Yet then, again, this very man to take another! without leaving me the right, the pretence of easing my fond heart with tears! For, oh! I can't reproach him, though the same hand that raised me to this height now throws me down the precipice.

Mr. Seal. Dear lady! Oh, yet one moment's patience: my heart grows full with your affliction.—But yet there's something in your story that——

Ind. My portion here is bitterness and sorrow.

Mr. Seal. Do not think so. Pray answer me: does Bevil know your name and family?

Ind. Alas! too well! Oh, could I be any other thing than what I am——I'll tear away all traces of my former self, my little ornaments, the remains of my first state, the hints of what I ought to have been——

[*In her disorder she throws away a bracelet, which* SEALAND *takes up, and looks earnestly on it.*

Mr. Seal. Ha! what's this? My eyes are not deceived! It is, it is the same! the very bracelet which I bequeathed to my wife at our last mournful parting.

Ind. What said you, sir? Your wife? Whither does my fancy carry me? What means this unfelt motion at my heart? And yet, again my fortune but deludes me; for if I err not, sir, your name is Sealand; but my lost father's name was——

Mr. Seal. Danvers; was it not?

Ind. What new amazement? That is, indeed, my family.

Mr. Seal. Know, then, when my misfortunes drove me to the Indies, for reasons too tedious now to mention, I changed my name of Danvers into Sealand.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isab. If yet there wants an explanation of your wonder, examine well this face (yours, sir, I well remember), gaze on and read in me your sister, Isabella.

Mr. Seal. My sister!

Isab. But here's a claim more tender yet——your Indiana, sir, your long-lost daughter.

Mr. Seal. Oh, my child! my child!

Ind. All gracious Heaven! is it possible! do I embrace my father?

Mr. Seal. And I do hold thee.—These passions are too strong for utterance. Rise, rise, my child, and give my tears their way.—Oh, my sister! [*Embracing her.*

Isab. Now, dearest niece, my groundless fears, my painful cares no more shall vex thee. If I have wronged thy noble lover with too much suspicion, my just concern for thee, I hope, will plead my pardon.

Mr. Seal. Oh! make him, then, the full amends, and be yourself the messenger of joy. Fly this instant! tell him all these wondrous turns of Providence in his favour! Tell him I have now a daughter to bestow which he no longer will decline; that this day he still shall be a bridegroom; nor shall a fortune, the merit which his father seeks, be wanting. Tell him the reward of all his virtues waits on his acceptance. [*Exit* ISAB.] My dearest Indiana! [*Turns and embraces her.*

Ind. Have I, then, at last, a father's sanction on my love? His bounteous hand to give, and make my heart a present worthy of Bevil's generosity?

Mr. Seal. Oh, my child! how are our sorrows past o'erpaid by such a meeting! Though I have lost so many years of soft paternal dalliance with thee, yet, in one day to find thee thus, and thus bestow thee, in such perfect happiness, is ample, ample reparation!—And yet, again, the merit of thy lover——

Ind. Oh! had I spirits left to tell you of his actions! how strongly filial duty has suppressed his love; and how concealment still has doubled all his obligations; the pride, the joy of his alliance, sir, would warm your heart, as he has conquered mine.

Mr. Seal. How laudable is love when born of virtue! I burn to embrace him——

Ind. See, sir, my aunt already has succeeded, and brought him to your wishes.

Enter ISABELLA, *with* SIR JOHN BEVIL, BEVIL, JUN., MRS. SEALAND, CIMBERTON, MYRTLE, *and* LUCINDA.

Sir J. Bev. [*Entering.*] Where, where's this scene of wonder? Mr. Sealand, I congratulate, on this occasion, our mutual happiness——Your good sister, sir, has, with the story of your daughter's fortune, filled us with surprise and joy. Now all exceptions are removed; my son has now avowed his love, and turned all former jealousies and doubts to approbation; and, I am told, your goodness has consented to reward him.

Mr. Seal. If, sir, a fortune equal to his father's hopes can make this object worthy his acceptance.

Bev. Jun. I hear your mention, sir, of fortune, with pleasure only as it may prove the means to reconcile the best of fathers to my love. Let him be provident, but let me be happy.—My ever-destined, my acknowledged wife!

[*Embracing* INDIANA.

Ind. Wife! Oh, my ever loved! My lord! my master!

Sir J. Bev. I congratulate myself, as well as you, that

I had a son who could, under such disadvantages, discover your great merit.

Mr. Seal. Oh, Sir John! how vain, how weak is human prudence! What care, what foresight, what imagination could contrive such blest events, to make our children happy, as Providence in one short hour has laid before us?

Cimb. [*To* MRS. SEALAND.] I am afraid, madam, Mr. Sealand is a little too busy for our affair. If you please, we'll take another opportunity.

Mrs. Seal. Let us have patience, sir.

Cimb. But we make Sir Geoffry wait, madam.

Myrt. O, sir, I am not in haste.

[*During this*, BEV., JUN., *presents* LUCINDA *to* INDIANA.

Mr. Seal. But here! here's our general benefactor! Excellent young man, that could be at once a lover to her beauty and a parent to her virtue.

Bev. Jun. If you think that an obligation, sir, give me leave to overpay myself, in the only instance that can now add to my felicity, by begging you to bestow this lady on Mr. Myrtle.

Mr. Seal. She is his without reserve; I beg he may be sent for. Mr. Cimberton, notwithstanding you never had my consent, yet there is, since I last saw you, another objection to your marriage with my daughter.

Cimb. I hope, sir, your lady has concealed nothing from me?

Mr. Seal. Troth, sir, nothing but what was concealed from myself—another daughter, who has an undoubted title to half my estate.

Cimb. How, Mr. Sealand? Why, then, if half Mrs. Lucinda's fortune is gone, you can't say that any of my estate is settled upon her. I was in treaty for the whole; but if that is not to be come at, to be sure there can be no bargain. Sir, I have nothing to do but to take my

leave of your good lady, my cousin, and beg pardon for the trouble I have given this old gentleman.

Myrt. That you have, Mr. Cimberton, with all my heart. [*Discovers himself.*

All. Mr. Myrtle!

Myrt. And I beg pardon of the whole company that I assumed the person of Sir Geoffry, only to be present at the danger of this lady being disposed of, and in her utmost exigence to assert my right to her; which, if her parents will ratify, as they once favoured my pretensions, no abatement of fortune shall lessen her value to me.

Luc. Generous man!

Mr. Seal. If, sir, you can overlook the injury of being in treaty with one who has meanly left her, as you have generously asserted your right in her, she is yours.

Luc. Mr. Myrtle, though you have ever had my heart, yet now I find I love you more, because I bring you less.

Myrt. We have much more than we want; and I am glad any event has contributed to the discovery of our real inclinations to each other.

Mrs. Seal. Well! however, I'm glad the girl's disposed of, anyway. [*Aside.*

Bev. Myrtle, no longer rivals now, but brothers!

Myrt. Dear Bevil, you are born to triumph over me! but now our competition ceases; I rejoice in the pre-eminence of your virtue, and your alliance adds charms to Lucinda.

Sir J. Bev. Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have set the world a fair example: your happiness is owing to your constancy and merit; and the several difficulties you have struggled with evidently show—

Whate'er the generous mind itself denies,
The secret care of Providence supplies.

[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

By Mr. Welsted.

Intended to be Spoken by Indiana.

Our author, whom entreaties cannot move,
Spite of the dear coquetry that you love,
Swears he'll not frustrate (so he plainly means)
By a loose Epilogue, his decent scenes.
Is it not, sirs, hard fate I meet to-day,
To keep me rigid still beyond the play?
And yet I'm saved a world of pains that way.
I now can look, I now can move at ease,
Nor need I torture these poor limbs to please;
Nor with the hand or foot attempt surprise,
Nor wrest my features, nor fatigue my eyes:
Bless me! what freakish gambols have I played!
What motions tried, and wanton looks betrayed!
Out of pure kindness all! to over-rule
The threatened hiss, and screen some scribbling fool.
With more respect I'm entertained to-night:
Our author thinks I can with ease delight.
My artless looks while modest graces arm,
He says, I need but to appear, and charm.
A wife so formed, by these examples bred,
Pours joy and gladness round the marriage bed;
Soft source of comfort, kind relief from care,
And 'tis her least perfection to be fair.
The nymph with Indiana's worth who vies,
A nation will behold with Bevil's eyes.

FINIS.

THE SCHOOL OF ACTION.

(A FRAGMENT).

THE *School of Action* was the play which Steele was endeavouring to finish in 1723-5. The fragment which we have would have required a great deal of revising before it could have been put upon the stage. The MS., from which the piece was printed by Nichols, is in the British Museum (Add. MS., 5145c). It is not in Steele's writing, and the first few leaves are now wanting. I have restored the original reading in several instances in which Nichols made unnecessary alterations. There are several memoranda on the subject among the Blenheim MSS. Here is one of them :—

"Minutes for the play itself.—First Act. The beginning as I have it at Home in y^e^ Scheme between Brainwell and Lightfoot ; after y^t^ y^e^ calling over y^e^ House w^th^ the actors, and y^e^ severall purposes y^t^ y^e^ Playhouse might be usefull for signified.—Act 2^d.^ The Country family wait as in an Inn at the playhouse ; all that can be done by the playhouse to terrifie y^e^ Attorney and his Wife, and all that can delight y^e^ young Lady by Theatricall Powers is exposed and explained. A Critick upon various Actions. —Act 3^d.^ The Electra of Sophocles, where Mrs. Porter is to be the Queen, and y^e^ Tragedy of Sophocles to be made y^e^ Moddle is thoroughly set forth in a way attempted to be truly sublime.—Act 4^th.^ The Country

Family, knowing of the Murder done there, resolved to bear Witness of it and prosecute it according to Law." And again, "Let Booth be Orestes, with all the prepossession and love of His Mother with the necessity upon Him of killing Her, and resolving upon it all of a sudden from passion to passion in an Hurry,—yet commanding all his Resentments to execute His design.—His regard for His sister and her urging Him." The following are other rough notes :—"Jenky to be instructed to be a ghost and torment His Brother—not to be y^t^ of Hamlet. Johnson to be the false Brother—Mrs. Willis, His Wife, urging to give up.—They miss the young lady for 2^d.^ Act—but don't value so y^t^ Her fortune is safe in His hands. . . . Let Pinsars ramble from place to place, and getting clear of the Play House—where he meets Evill Constable (?) and His Mirmidons.—Then Buntho's Ghost and all the other incidents possible—appears still in y^e^ House, and gives up to Severn, &c." And again :—"Introduce a Woman, Drunk, to be acted by Cibber, to talk at beginning Lewdly in a Mask, y^e^ rest in Whisper. Let Pinsars be assisted by an Army of y^e^ Playhouse to fight his way out ; he and his man Ralph and his Wife Striking all in earnest, assisted by the Constable. . . . Let Him Threaten to demolish the Whore of Babylon—Speak of the Dragon and all the Cant of the Presbyterian Zeal against Plays, &c., but fight. . . . For the Prologue take notice of this play as a *Posthumous Work* according to Dr. Partridge's freinds. Spider and Dotterell's Quality : Beasts made before men —Therefore the Dotterells must give way, for they were made before Spiders were in being, and not made before they were men."

The following notes evidently refer to another piece :—"To take the play y^t^ Lyes in loose parts in my Scrutoire and lay it together for the Stage : To ridicule y^e^ whole Mechanick of Dr. Faustus, &c., and all things of that kind for y^e^ Theatre—make persons to play tricks, break

necks, and the like. . . . There is no true nobility but in the practise of Vertue and right reason, where there is nothing can be little. . . . Make him go to his certain Ruin for want of knowledge in a Circumstance he might know if he had looked into a letter w^{ch} contains a secret Contrived against him, but he cannot pry into because it comes into his Hands unwarrantably : make this y^{e} great Incident of his distress. . . . To ridicule our Slavery to Italian Musick, to have an ode of Anacreon set in Greek performed. To observe upon y^{e} absurdity of making distresses and mirth for y^{e} Vulgar out of y^{e} Accidents y^{t} befall the body, as in the play of *The Chances*: The old Woman in her Colick pains toothless and defective through age is exposed as a Jest."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mr. SEVERN, a barrister, lover of Miss DOLLY.
Mr. HUMBER, his friend.
Mr. PINCERS, an old wealthy country Attorney, guardian to DOLLY.
RALPH, his Man.

Mr. DOTTERELL, Mr. SPIDER } Comedians.

Mr. GWILLYN, BUSKIN, TRAGEDIAN, GENERAL } Candidates for the Stage.

Mrs. PINCERS.
Miss DOLLY, Ward to PINCERS.
MARGERY, her Maid.
Mrs. UMBRAGE, an Actress.
Mrs. FENNELL.
Her DAUGHTER, a Candidate for the Stage.

Barber, Constable, Waiter, Servants, Rabble, &c.

THE SCHOOL OF ACTION.

ACT THE FIRST.

Enter MR. SEVERN *and* MR. HUMBER.

SEV. The world is much more easily imposed upon, than you studious and modest men imagine.

Hum. Dear Severn, if such superficial qualifications as you talk of will accomplish gentlemen and ladies, I own to you, hard has been our fate, in having suffered pains and penalties (fit only for malefactors) in great schools, and been immured in college the best years of life, to acquire learning and attain to sciences that are all useless when we come into the world.

Sev. Pardon me, dear Humber, I did not say useless; I only argue that you had better, to make your fortune, have ordinary qualifications, such as a good mien, common understanding, an easy address, than great faculties and talents under the oppression of bashfulness, rusticity, or——

Hum. Or knowledge.

Sev. It shall be or knowledge if you please—if you mean knowledge kept to a man's self, or in a man's keeping, that is afraid or ashamed to exert it.

Hum. Well, be it as you propose; go on.

Sev. I say, then, your taste for books and fine writing, your judgment in the faculties of the soul, my town education, and skill in the airs, motions, graces, and abilities of the body, will enable us to carry on this our design of supporting a new playhouse, and keeping a School of Action.

Hum. Well, if we break—I can go down again to my fellowship at Oxford, and laugh and be laughed at among a parcel of worthy and ingenious men, whom I will entertain with my adventures; and I think the undertaking cannot but introduce at least matter of humour and mirth: if it does not advance our fortunes, it will heighten our conversation.—But to your School of Action.

Sev. As all that reside in inns of court and universities, though they do not enter into any of the learned professions, are yet better accomplished for any other ways of life by having the same education with those who go into them; so will all who come to our School of Action be better qualified in their own characters, by being instructed among players, who are taught to become any part which shall be imposed upon them.

Hum. Thou art a rare sanguine fellow to think this will do. But I have observed confidence in a man's self that he shall perform a thing, helps him forward better than any other quality about him—Well, hang it, in order to make this experiment, I will be as enterprising and confident as you.

Sev. Let me, then, observe one thing, for fear of your relapsing into your academic shyness; that you must beware of standing as if you were a thinking statue, a case for a spirit to reflect in, and not a mind and body acting

together. You improve the soul only in your colleges—you neglect the body.

Hum. Thou art in the right: I have studied eloquence till I am dumb.

Sev. I am glad you see your want and infirmity. If you will speak, I know you will talk well. I know when you are unreservedly familiar you talk very well, as you did t'other night concerning the principles of motion and rest. Suppose, as you are resolved to talk, you would resolve also to move, and practise a little local motion. Give me leave to show you how you perform it. Go to the other side of the stage. [*He walks thither.*] Thus you walked—thus your shoulders—thus your legs—thus your breast—thus your hips.—Pray adventure back again—thus—

Hum. Pish! I am a little hurt, and grow peevish with this mimicry; though I believe you are right enough.

Sev. Well, I only show you: it is not necessary you should, as to the present purpose, be jaunty; you are to mind more important matters. You are censor, observe, upon the sense and spirit of what is said; leave the manner of doing it to me, the prompter.

Hum. But, as you are picking up people from all quarters, are the old gentleman and his lady, the young girl, and the maid and man, who came hither last night, all to be players? and why are they accommodated here in the tiring-room, as if it were an ordinary lodging?

Sev. You shall know all in due time and order. Ho!—Harry!—Who waits there? [*Enters a* SERVANT.] Is the whole house come?

Serv. They are all here, sir, except the thunderer and the candle-snuffer; they say it is a mistake, and that they are never required to come to rehearsal.

Sev. Tell them they shall forfeit; the thunderer shall pay two groats; they—they shall be fined a day's pay. [*Exit* SERVANT.]—My dear friend, while the company is

assembling in the several apartments, I will explain further : You are to know that old master Pincers is a rich northern attorney, who understands the law much better as it is the business of it to punish offenders, than as it is to protect the innocent. The young girl is a ward left under his care, and has a very considerable estate in that country. He has brought her up to town to settle her.

Hum. In the playhouse ?

Sev. Pray, hear. In the playhouse ? no. Of all things in nature, stage-plays (as he calls them) are his aversion. But they are no less Miss Dolly's delight. As I had my education, that is to say, ate and drank, conversed and lay some years every night at Gray's Inn, I made a notable pleader before our bench of justices in Cumberland, and grew very intimate with Mr. Pincers. He took such a fancy to my promising parts—for, you must know, I pretended to be a rogue to gain his good-will—that, with a hint of five hundred pounds reward for my share in the transaction, he communicated to me a design of disposing of this young lady by way of sale.

Hum. Good—and thought you a proper broker to find out a husband, or rather a purchaser.

Sev. Right. "Mr. Severn," said he, "you know there is nothing more common than to observe that orphans are a prey, by reason of their great wealth, and marry unhappily."

Hum. And therefore——

Sev. And therefore he would have a receipt for *all* her fortune, for delivering *half* of it to the man who should marry her—"which," said he, "shall be no fraud to the gentleman ; for he shall settle only an equivalent for ten thousand pounds, which is the moiety. By this means," continued my conscientious friend, "I shall observe how he behaves to this poor girl ; and can, if he deserves it, leave the other moiety to them by my will."

Hum. And what did you say to this hopeful project?

Sev. I fell in with it, and promised to find him a right young fellow for his purpose.

Hum. Did you so, sir? [*As going.*]

Sev. Now you grow a mere scholar again.

Hum. An honest gentleman is a mere scholar where a sharper is a wit—I will leave your accursed town to-night.

Sev. I will convince you that there is nothing mean or dishonourable on my part; but a lucky incident I should be stupid not to take hold of.

Hum. Say it; but your prologue is so long, you seem to know that the plot of your play is not easily to be defended.

Sev. You cannot say that till you know it. I agreed with him to find a young gentleman suitable to her, who shall bring as good an estate as she shall, and settle all upon her and the children of the marriage.

Hum. Well—who is the gentleman whom you have thought of to do this? On whom will you bestow the poor innocent girl who has never injured you?

Sev. Why, I have been thinking that over and over; and it is so hard to look into another's breast, that one may, after all appearances, be mistaken; and, therefore, I have resolved upon the only man who I was sure was honest—even my own proper self.

Hum. You are most conscientiously impartial and disinterested.

Sev. I think myself conscientious, though neither impartial nor disinterested. I consider that he would certainly sell her elsewhere on his own terms, without regard to her happiness. In my hands she will have her estate her own, with the incumbrance only of a man who loves her, and whom I believe she loves, and who may increase that estate for her. Consider, he would do what he designed, whether I would or not.

Hum. I consider you will do what you design, whether I will or not. Nay, further, I cannot but own the circumstances much alleviate the guilt on your part. Nay, if you fairly get the girl's good-will, I will allow your attempt not only excusable, but praiseworthy.

Sev. There spoke my good genius.—In the country, as much as he trusted me in the secret of cheating her, he never let me see her alone, or without witnesses; his wife, the maid, or man, or all of them, were constantly present. But, as she is a great lover and reader of plays, and of a great deal of wit and humour, we could speak one language and look another, above their knowledge or observation. I sent for him to town in order to marry her, insisting on my five hundred pounds; for he would not trust me, did he not know my price. I have lodged all here, whence they shall never go out till dear miss implores it of me, or has justice done her by me or somebody to her liking.

Hum. There you justify all the art you can use for yourself. And may you win and wear her, since you plot her redemption though yourself should not succeed!

Sev. Well, we have done talking; let us to action. My business is to review my forces, and not neglect my main plot, but consider my playhouse and my mistress at the same time; and, while I am preparing the one, make love to the other.—Here, Jack, call all the actors—let the whole house march.—Tragedy drums and trumpets, fifes, kettledrums and clarions shall wake my country lodgers, fright my old parchment, and charm my little northern pilgrim—my dear refugee—I will understand her no other. Beat, sound, and play. Make all people be in their posts round the stage, and answer in all parts to the stage.—All shall be done that can be to make her pass her time pleasantly. She shall always expect to see me, but not see me till I have abundant convincing proofs that I am in her favour. Thus if I can save her, and

save her for myself, it will be an exquisite happiness; if not, to save her from this rascal is but my duty. Oh! I should have told you that when Miss Dolly came in, I conveyed a letter into her pocket, intimating where she was, that she may be surprised at nothing; for I love the dear thing so tenderly that I could not give her the shortest uneasiness, to purchase the most lasting good or pleasure to myself. [*Here begins the march.*] Hist!

Pin. [*Within.*] Ho! chamberlain, bring me my boots—where is the chamberlain?—What is the noise?——

Ralph [*Within.*] The drums.

Pin. What is the matter?

Ralph. The train-bands, belike, master.

Pin. Ho! chamberlain!

Hum. While the rest of the country family are thus deceived, Dolly is let into the whole matter, and won't be surprised at anything. If she humours the deceit it is a good symptom on your side.—This must be a fruitful circumstance of mirth.

Sev. Nymphs, shepherds, ghosts, angels, and demons, shall tease the old rascal; and all the while Miss Dolly see and hear nothing but according to the notice I have given her.

Hum. While you are thus busied about your people, and managing your design, which I have not much taste for (I want that mercury about me), I will go about the house and view the accommodations—they say it is the most convenient one in the world.

Sev. Sir, take your humour; I will pursue mine, and call you when the circumstance is above my reach. [*Exit* HUMBER.] Well, march by; let the kings take place of all the people, next them bishops, then judges—no, we had as good not to discompose their dresses. [*Among the march of the actors he observes* WILL DOTTERELL.] Ho! Mr. Dotterell, Mr. Dotterell.

Dot. Sir! Your most humble servant, good Mr. Severn. What, have you a part for me in your new play? It was you that first thought of making an actor of me, and I have gained some reputation; and, harkee, you have made a deal of me, I can tell you.

Sev. Ay, ay, I know thou art a town favourite—thy name is not spoken of but it raises mirth. Let us see, what parts have you acted? You have acted all manner of things as well as persons. You began, I think, a flower-pot, in *Dioclesian*[1]; then you have performed another ingenious part, been a chair, I think, at another opera; you have represented all the appetites—as I take it, you do hunger best, you are a fine fellow at a cold chicken—Then you have been all sorts of trades, but you shine most in the tailor in *Epsom Wells*,[2] you beat your wife most successfully.

Dot. It was thought I laid her on as well as another, for you may remember she was a bitter one, and she provoked me some six or seven drubs beyond what the poet writ for her.

Sev. Well, look you, Will, I design greater things for you than any poet of them all; why, you shall act a ghost in the ensuing play.

Dot. A ghost of me! No, it can never be.

Sev. Yes, yes, you oaf, you shall be a country ghost. You shall come to the country gentleman who lay here last night in the figure of his deceased brother, a fat justice of the peace, who left all his money in his hands—and he cheats him. Why, I don't know but you may be the luckiest ghost that ever appeared. Who knows but the old rascal may repent and pay you? If he does I'm sure you'll take it.

[1] An adaptation, by Thomas Betterton, of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Prophetess*.

[2] A comedy, by Shadwell, in which Fribble, a haberdasher, is one of the characters.

Dot. Nay, nay, there's no doubt of that. What has the poor money done? I will take it, as you say.

Sev. Look you there: when you have done this part you are a most accomplished player, you have gone through all the degrees of action. You came out of the parsley-bed, as they say to the children; you have been everything——

Dot. A ghost! I shall never be sober enough. What if it be a country ghost—yet every man is serious after his death. I shall certainly laugh, and discover all.

Sev. Well, bid him they call Dicky come to me.

Dot. Dicky, Dicky, come to me; come, Dicky, come to Mr. Severn. I am not a ghost yet; you need not be afraid.

Enter SPIDER.

Sev. Mr. Spider, I have a part for you; but I am afraid you have too good an air, too much dignity in your person, to do it well.

Spi. Oh, I warrant you they never put me to act anything in tragedy, though my genius and temper is altogether for great and sublime things.

Sev. No doubt on't, Mr. Spider, but you must be content at present to do me a courtesy, and still keep in comedy; for you are to be a tapster.

Spi. What! when Mr. Dotterell (as I apprehend) is to be a ghost, am I to be but a tapster?

Sev. Why, you are to be a tapster to the inn in which he is to be a ghost, so that he's in a manner in your keeping. All the ghosts in inns are kept there by the tapster or chamberlain; now you are to be both in this inn that I imagine.

Spi. Oh! oh! I begin to conceive you. I am to be a live tapster, and Mr. Dotterell is to be the ghost of a dead man that died in the inn and left a power of money

behind, and so haunts the house because his own cousin had not—I understand it very well.—Look you, Mr. Dotterell, it was I and my master contrived to kill this gentleman for the great bag of money he brought into our house. Come, come, we'll go in and consider how to act these parts, without giving Mr. Severn any more trouble about it.

Sev. But there is another thing that, I fear, will go much against you; and that is, you are to be excessively saucy.

Spi. No, I shall make no scruple of that if he proves an unmannerly guest, I'll warrant you.—But, Mr. Dotterell, let us go and lay our heads together.

Sev. Now, gentlemen, you are going out in your own persons, and no man living can tell which of you should take place. Certainly, Mr. Spider, you are somebody or other; and, Mr. Dotterell, so are you. Now I would fain know which of you is to take place.

Spi. Pray, good Mr. Dotterell.

Dot. Nay, nay, Mr. Spider, I'll never be outdone in civility; you must pardon me, indeed, sir.

Spi. Nay, sir.

Dot. Nay, sir.

Spi. Nay, sir.

Dot. Nay, nay, nay, sir, if you go to that.

[*Turns aside.*

Spi. Nay, but, good sir—excuse me, sir.

[*Turning another way.*

Dot. Oh, Mr. Spider, your servant for that, sir.

[*Takes him up in his arms.*

Spi. Sir, you conquer me beyond expression; sir, you run away with me.

Dot. Indeed, sir, I must say you are a very easy gentleman; you are carried away with the least civility, look you, sir; for——

[*Carrying him backwards and forwards.*

Spi. Plague on't, what a misfortune it is to be a little fellow! Though I have a soul as great as Hercules, this fellow can deal with me.

Dot. Oh, my dear little Dicky Spider!

[*Exit, kicking him in his arms.*

Sev. [*Solus*]. Here's a great piece of difficulty adjusted; but I observe very few difficulties of ceremony of much greater moment than this, and wish they were all to be so ended. Well, now have I the hardest task in all my affair to pursue: To persuade a woman who is young, pleasant, and agreeable, to act a part for me to another; to make love for me, instead of receiving love made to her; and there is no way of obtaining of 'em but by making love to them. They are used to no other language, and understand no other.—Ho! who waits there?

Enter WAITER.

Waiter. Sir; do you call, sir?

Sev. Pray, sir, call Mrs. Umbrage hither. If she be in the green-room, tell her I beg to speak with her—I must form myself into all the good humour I can to entertain her, or I shall never get her to come into it.

Enter MRS. UMBRAGE.

Oh, here she comes.—Well, madam, I have cast parts for you, and named you to many, but never so very nice a one as I am to desire of you to undertake at present. To overlook yourself and deliver the application made to another which had been more rightly directed to yourself, is a greatness of mind—is a candour, to be found only in Mrs. Umbrage.

Umb. Well, Mr. Severn, you have waved your cap sufficiently; you have done homage and made your acknowledgments; pray proceed to the matter.

Sev. The northern young lady you have often heard me talk of, is in town, and lay in this house last night.

Umb. That has been the conversation of the green-room.—But what do you design in all this you are going to let me into?

Sev. I would be well with that young lady. Nay, I think I am so.

Umb. A man may often be mistaken in those points, as knowing as you are.

Sev. I grant it, madam; I have a mind to know it more explicitly, and have the most evident proofs of it; which I will not desire till I have given her sufficient testimony of a disinterested zeal and service for her.

Umb. That is, indeed, the noblest and the surest way to approach a sensible spirit, as I have heard you describe hers to be. Pray let me hear what argument you have for thinking she has a disposition towards you; for you know we naturally are too apt to believe what we wish.

Sev. A good opinion is in a man's own power to create. I took care to appear in the best manner where she was; to be always in great good humour, and show a wonderful deference to her in all my actions; which I constantly expressed by my eye only, as afraid of notice and observation. She had her eyes as attentive to mine, and she never lost the least expression that I made to her, but turned away her eyes when mine grew too familiar.—But give me leave to tell you one particular occasion wherein I plainly think she declared herself to me.

Umb. That will be worth hearing indeed; I shall be glad to hear the language of the eyes translated by the tongue. [*Smiling.*

Sev. You are to know, madam, that there happened one day in the north, a great Quaker's wedding at which she and I were present. They went with the greatest gravity and decorum through the whole circumstance of it. But at night she was invited, so was I, to see the

bride and bridegroom put to bed. Several of her maidens attended her; several of their young men him. It is the nature of their superstition to keep their passions bridled, restrained, and formally dissembled. They have none of those flights, palpitations, gambols, and follies, which divert the mind and break it from its main object.

Umb. You are going into a fine story; but I must trust your discretion.

Sev. Madam, you may. [*Bowing.*] To be sure, the bridegroom is laid by his bride; the company stands in the most profound silence, as contemplating the objects before them; he a young man of twenty-five, she a young woman of twenty; he wishing our absence; she fearing it. The eyes of everyone of us spectators naturally searching the object with which they could best be pleased in the same condition, my eyes met Miss Pincers', in which there was such a sweet compliance, such a revel invitation, immediately checked when observed and answered by me, that I have ever since concluded that she had something more than goodwill for me.

Umb. Well, if she has it, I shall be far from lessening it; but will, as you seem to desire, accompany her, and improve it.

Sev. I form great hopes of success from that declaration; but as the lady is mighty theatrically disposed, I beseech you to show her the pleasure and beauties of the house.

Umb. All that is in my power; all that is not I must leave to you.

Sev. I will not doubt of success.

To gain a she, a sure she-friend provide;
For woman is to woman the best guide.

ACT THE SECOND.

PINCERS *and his* WIFE *discovered with* MISS DOLLY, RALPH, *and* MARGERY.

PIN. Fie, Miss Dolly ; do you say you heard no manner of noise when I was knocking my heart out ?

Dolly. None in the least. In the country they talked of the rattling of coaches here in London. I heard nothing of it ; I can hardly think I am yet in the City.

Mrs. Pin. Why, Miss Dolly, you won't say so, sure ! Did you hear no drums nor trumpets ?

Dolly. Not in the least.

Mrs. Pin. O gemini ! Then, to be sure, the house is haunted, and the man of the inn has killed some traveller, and hid him behind the hangings, and we are all disturbed for it—'tis so to be sure.

Ralph. It is no otherwise. I wonder Counsellor Severn would bring master to such an inn as this is, so I do.

Pin. Chamberlain ! why, chamberlain !——

Enter SPIDER (*as* Chamberlain).

Spi. Do you call, sir ?

Pin. Do you call, sir ? Ay, marry do I, sir. What has

been doing in the inn here, or in the streets, with trumpets and kettle-drums?

Spi. Trumpets and kettle-drums! Poor gentleman!

Pin. Poor gentleman! no, no poor gentleman.—I am afraid this house is no better than it should be.

Spi. Has not your worship lain warm? The bed is as good a bed as any in the house. A man of fifteen hundred a-year lay in it, and slept all night. He came to town to be fluxed. He was very much a gentleman, and owned he slept very well; and his bones ached but little in that easy bed.

Pin. Rogue! put honest folks, that have been man and wife these twenty years, into a p—— bed together!

Mrs. Pin. In a p—— bed, husband! Take the law of him.

Pin. Sirrah! has not Counsellor Severn been here this morning? Go, sirrah, bring me some water and a towel; I'll go to the Counsellor's chambers immediately. I'll trounce this house. [*Exit* SPIDER.

Dolly. [*Aside.*] I'll look over my letter again. [*Reads.*] "Be afraid of nothing; but know, that the disagreeable shapes Mr. Pincers is entertained with are not to appear to you; and when you know this, you may partake of that diversion of tormenting those who attempt only to sell and betray you. What you see are persons and appearances belonging to the several plays which are acted in this house."—Oh me! how pure is all this!

Re-enter SPIDER, *with a* Barber.

Spi. Here is the water and towel, and here is a barber if you want him. [*Exit.*

Pin. Harkee, Mr. Barber; you look like an honest man, put on your trimming cloths about me. I'll inquire of you what sort of people live in this house—Ha! what's this here?

"To Mr. PINCERS, Esq."

[*A letter has come down from the air with this direction.*]

"Sir, repent of the ill you are contriving before it be too late. I shall appear to you and your wife only. In hopes of justice, I remain,

"Your dead and buried brother,

"RALPH PINCERS."

Enter SPIDER, *as* Tapster.

Spi. Sir, do you call for nothing this morning? are not you dry, nor your wife neither, ha, old dry-boots?

Pin. What does this mean? A letter come directed to me out of the air—and my brother coming! Wife! Margery, do you see that letter? What can it mean? Look you, sauce-box; good man, Tapster, I shall take a course with you, sirrah, I shall.

Spi. You are a sneaking country bumpkin, sir.

Enter DOTTERELL, *dressed like a Country Squire.*

Pin. Bless us! there comes on my brother, in his old boots and grey riding-coat. 'Tis he: I ha'n't the heart to speak to it.

Dot. [*Aside.*] A country ghost! I shall laugh out. How frightened the dog is! I'll warrant the rogue has a great sum of money of mine. I'll make him give it me. —[*To* PINCERS.] Repent, and don't cheat your brother, and break your word with a man that is dead and buried. —I shall laugh before the old put has refunded——

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Pin. There is the justice come to fetch us away with him—he's come for Dolly's portion.—You know I was always for giving it all to her since Nancy's death.

Dot. Give me my money—give me my money.

Pin. Oh! how I tremble! yet dare not speak to him.

[*He comes nearer.*

Dot. Show my last will and testament. Give me my money.

Pin. I cannot speak to him, to tell him I'll do everything.

Dot. I will haunt thee, and tear thy wife from the fell——

Mrs. Pin. He presents the figure of the poor child we had to cheat Dolly with! Oh, husband, he'll have me to punish thy sins! Oh, he has me, now, now, husband! [*They both sink with the* Barber *at a trap-door.*]

Ralph. "He presents the figure of the poor child we had to cheat Dolly with!" How shall I get off this ground. [*Going away, fearfully.*

Marg. Oh, Ralph! can you leave me?

[*They meet trembling, as if they found the place open.*]

Ralph. Let us keep together, and not go underground in a strange place.

Marg. Tell me, Ralph, whether there was anything between you and Nan?

Ralph. Ask no questions, ask no questions, good Margery. [*Exeunt.*

Dolly. Whither shall I go, or where will this adventure end? Sure, Mr. Severn will——

[*Four leaves of the MS. are here missing.*]

* * * *

Umb. The pretty good-natured absurdity! [*Aside.*]—But, madam, you forgot Lorenzo that you mentioned just now: you must see his—[*Whistle. Scene changes.*] there, madam, there's the place he spoke those charming words in. But I forget, madam, you are a country lady, and delight rather in airy prospects, tracts of land, and beauteous lawns. [*Scene changes to the Park.*

Dolly. Is this the Park? Pray, madam, where is the Birdcage Walk, where lovers meet for intrigue?

Umb. You shall see it in due time; for I have a thousand other things to tell you of. You must understand human life, and what passes in the world, before you give yourself away.—But I must not inform you of it abruptly and hastily.

Dolly. It will be charitable in you, madam, to do so.

Umb. I know you must be an admirer of poetry and good sense, without which music is insipid, or at least but half-informed.

Dolly. I have wished myself at London a thousand times, to see operas; but I would not have them sing nonsense.

Umb. Therefore, madam, I hope you'll like the poetry which Mr. Severn has ordered for the stage in celebration of two faithful lovers: they were persons in an humble condition, and no ways conspicuous but by their passion for each other; indeed, just what they should be conspicuous for——

AN INSCRIPTION AND EPITAPH IN A COUNTRY CHURCH.[1]

"Near this place lie the bodies of John Hewett and Sarah Drew, an industrious young man and a virtuous maiden of this parish, who, having been contracted in marriage, and being with many others at harvest-work, were both in one instant killed by lightning on the last day of July, 1718."

Dolly. Oh! but the poetry—what a sad thing 'twould have been if one of them had been left alive—But pray let's see the poetry.

[1] Pope tells the story of these lovers in a letter to Lady M. W. Montagu. He wrote two poetical epitaphs, one of which, with slight modifications, is given by Steele, and afterwards this prose inscription, which Lord Harcourt thought would be better understood by the common people.

Umb. Have but patience and we will have convenience, miss, to sit down and hear it. [*Scene changes to a bower.*

"Think not with rigorous judgment seized,
A pair so faithful could expire;
Victims so pure Heaven saw well pleased,
And snatched them in celestial fire.
Live well, and fear not sudden fate;
When death calls virtue to the grave,
Alike 'tis justice soon or late,
Mercy alike to kill or save.
Virtue alike can hear the call,
And face the flash that melts the ball."

But let us take our places, and carry it gravely, suitable to your fortune and merit.

[*Here it is performed.*

ACT THE THIRD.

Enter SEVERN *and* HUMBER.

SEV. I have often begged you to let me shift for myself, let my character sink or swim. Every man who attempts any new thing must allow mankind to talk of him as they please. I do not regard what the world says, but what they should say.

Hum. It is very odd that we have never happy moments but at midnight, so different are our tempers; and we are made to keep together from no other rule, but that we never expostulate upon past mistakes; to meet again after a misunderstanding, contains in itself all manner of apology, all expostulation; but, if I might, I would complain that the business of the house is neglected while you are attending your amours.

Sev. No; there is a present leisure to attend anything of that kind, to hear any person or persons that pretend to the stage, to examine scenes or goods to be shown or exhibited there, and give them their answers.—Let us take our places accordingly.

Hum. It is wondrous to consider the folly of mankind, that think so lightly and so meanly of the faculties of a player.—Roscius had three thousand scholars, and but one only fit for the purpose.

Sev. There's no arguing mankind out of their humour or their taste; they may be gained upon by skill and labour, but that must be felt before it's seen.

Hum. Now you begin to philosophise: but let us hear the people, in spite of vernacular dialect or tone, attempting to represent the most difficult characters of state. Mr. Duntaxat, if you please, we will now sit down and hear them. [*They sit down at table accordingly.*] Mr. Severn, you see he consents to take out places. [*Rings the bell.*] Who waits?

Enter SERVANT.

Servant. A great many people, sir; but none so importunate to be admitted as the Welsh gentleman, who offers to act the character of Hamlet for his own pleasure.

Hum. Plague on him, whose pleasure will it be besides?

Sev. Oh, all the world will like him; let us admit him by all means.

Hum. He, in his vernacular tone, will disparage a scene for ever by repeating it; but do as you will.

Sev. Pray desire the gentleman to walk in: pray, gentlemen, keep your countenance, for he is no fool; or if he is, he is a valiant one, and hath a great estate halfway up the atmosphere.

Enter MR. GWILLYN.

[*They all rise from their seats.*]

Sir, we understand the high obligation you lay upon us (pray sit down, sir) in condescending to tread the stage in the character of the Prince of Denmark; in which, sir, you are so far right, that he was a prince of a very ancient family, and not unworthy a gentleman of your character to represent.

Gwil. I have a respect for him, both for his plutt and his prains, and think I could do him justice.

Sev. There is no doubt of it, good sir; and if you please to pronounce the sentence, "To be and not to be," you'll mightily raise these gentlemen's expectations and gratitude to you for the favour you intend them.

Gwil. Sir, that will I do, if the gentlemen please to hear it. [*They all rise, and come forward with him.*

Gwil. "To pee and not to pee," &c.[1]

Sev. Most admirably spoke, sir. Be pleased to give us time to concert measures what day to act this play. Let our tailor wait upon you to adjust the shape and all things necessary. [*Exit* GWILLYN.

Hum. It's well we have got well clear of this humorous exceptious gentleman; but I was in terrible pain lest he should have observed your inclination to laugh.—But let us not lose time, but go on to answer other persons.

[*Rings the bell.*

Enter SERVANT.

Hum. Who waits without?

Servant. Very many people, sir; but the lady with her daughter says she has been here so often that she will be next admitted.

Sev. She will! she insists to see us altogether and makes a difficulty even to show her daughter's face. Now that is so preposterous and humourous, that I could not answer her civilly and in general, and so put her off.

Hum. Let her come in, however, and have her answer from us all.

Enter MRS. FENNELL, *with her* DAUGHTER.

Hum. Madam, what are your commands here?

[1] A copy of the speech from Pope's edition of Shakespeare, was sent to Steele by William Plaxton, on July 22, 1725; and in the margin Steele wrote: "Mr. Gwillim speaks this speech in the Welsh tone, looking at the gentlemen suspiciously, not speaking improperly, but as he is a Welshman" (Add. MS. 5145c f. 170).

Mrs. Fen. Gentlemen, I am a gentlewoman of a very ancient family.

Sev. Very likely, madam; but, indeed, madam, we sit here to provide for the stage, and not to hear pedigrees. If you are of a house of yesterday, and please to-day—you'll pardon me, madam—that is what we are to mind chiefly; but pray, madam, break into your business.

Mrs. Fen. Why, gentlemen, this young lady in a mask with me is my daughter, and I propose her for the stage; for I am reduced, and starve or beg we must not.

Sev. But, madam, please to show us how your daughter will help to keep us from wanting. Madam, we have a great charge already.

Mrs. Fen. Why, you see, gentlemen, her height is very well; she is neither tall nor short.

Sev. We allow it, madam; but that is not all: she must speak with a good air and grace.—Won't she unmask? Must not we see more than thus much of her?

Mrs. Fen. No, no, gentlemen, we must come to some manner of agreement before you see any further. To be a maid of honour, a waiting lady on your Statiras and Roxanas,[1] or any of your theatrical princesses, she'll deserve twenty shillings a week for mere dumb show—and I'll have assurance of that in case you like her face; or else it shan't be said she was offered to the playhouse.

Sev. Well, but, madam, that is not all; for let her be for dumb show only, her face is not all; she must be well limbed [*They whisper and confer.*]—she may sometimes be in a boy's dress—a Cupid, a young heir to a great family, a page, or a gentleman-usher.

Mrs. Fen. Why, I was aware of the objection, and have had a model taken of her legs, which you shall see, gentlemen. There they are; as fine a straight leg and

[1] Statira, wife of Alexander, is murdered by Roxana, the Bactrian, in Lee's tragedy, *The Rival Queens.*

as proper a calf—you shall seldom see a woman's leg so well made.—I don't question, gentlemen, but you have seen great choice, gentlemen, in your posts; are well acquainted with the symmetry of parts, and correspondence of limbs.

Sev. Well, madam, you speak of your goods so advantageously, and set them off so reasonably, that if the lady pleases to show her face, we shall give twenty shillings a week, certain.

Mrs. Fen. She is your servant, and shall constantly attend rehearsals. [DAUGHTER *unmasks.*

Sev. On my word, a very surprising face.—Pray, madam, may I beg the favour to see those pretty lips move?

Daughter. Yes, sir.

Sev. Pray, madam, raise your voice a note higher.

Mrs. Fen. Gentlemen, I beg she may be kept wholly for tragedy, for she takes prodigiously after me. She can act only an haughty part; I was prodigiously haughty in my youth. She will never act naturally anything but what's cruel and unnatural, as the men call it.

Sev. But, madam, can't she repeat any verses, any parts of a play? It's strange she should have an inclination to the stage, and yet nothing by heart.

Mrs. Fen. Oh, I have inured her to get as many things as possible to arm her against the wiles of men; as those concerning Sir Charles Sedley—Say on, good Betty.

Daughter. "Sedley has that prevailing gentle art,
That can with a resistless charm impart
The loosest wishes to the chastest heart."[1]

Sev. "The loosest wishes!"—I fancy somebody or other has seen her legs otherwise than by a model—she speaks so sensibly! [*Aside.*

Daughter. "Raise such a conflict, kindle such a fire
Between declining virtue and desire,

[1] These well-known lines are by Lord Rochester.

Till the poor vanquish'd maid dissolves away,
In dreams all night, in sighs and tears all day."

Sev. Well, madam, pluck up a spirit; and let us hear you grace it, and do it with an air. Speak it politely, with a side face; you are to imagine an audience though there is none; and pray speak it with courage—

"Sedley has that prevailing," &c.

Hum. Madam, you may be sure of all the encouragement and care your beauty and merit deserve.

[*Exeunt* MRS. FENNELL *and* DAUGHTER.

Well, now, let us look into some scenes that are under examination, whether proper to be exhibited or not. Let the scene of Mr. Buskin come on.

[*Trumpets sound, and drums beat a march.*]

Enter BUSKIN.

Busk. "In vain has conquest waited on my sword,
In vain th' obedient waves have wafted o'er
The bark in which I sailed; as if the gods
Had ordered nature to preserve her course
With gentle clime and season, to convey
In safety me, their instrument of fate."

Hum. Ho! brave, ho! brave. What's to come after that?

Busk. "All this was vain, since Clidiamira's eyes
Have met with mine—and stopped my race of glory.
Oh, Clidiamira—Oh! oh! oh! let all
The elements break loose—"

Hum. Ay, ay, to be sure, they can do no less, if Clidiamira's really angry; but not so fast, not so fast, if you please.

Busk. Pray, sir, give me leave—Oh, Mr. Humber, is it you? Your humble servant.—I submit—I know you are a critic.

Hum. To be free, sir, you must know this way of

blustering is a stage legerdemain; a trick upon the eyes and ears of the audience. Look you, sir, this is a time of licentiousness; and we must examine things, now we are setting up to strip you, to know whether what you say is good or not.

Busk. How, strip me!

Hum. Ay, strip you—for if it be not sense in your doublet, it is not in your long robe. High heels on your shoes, or the feathers on your beaver, cannot exalt you a tittle. No; you must know, good folks, this is all a cheat. Such stuff as this is only a tragedy of feathers—it is only lace and ribbon in distress; undress the actor, and the speech is spoiled.

All. Strip him—strip him!

[*They pull off his clothes.*

Hum. Now speak, now speak.

Busk. Give me my truncheon at least; I got it by heart with a stick in my hand.

Many. Ha, ha, ha; let him have his truncheon—let him have his truncheon.

Busk. Nay—pray, gentlemen and ladies, let me come on the same board.—Nay—

Hum. You shall do that.—Well, but begin.

Busk. "In vain has conquest"—shan't I have a little of the trumpet?

All. No, no, no.

Busk. Then the drum only?

All. No, no.

Busk. "Oh, Clidiamira—oh! oh! oh!"—It won't do; one can't follow either love or honour without some equipage.

Hum. Well then, master, to keep you in countenance, you shall take up your things, and in your doublet speak that sentiment in the play called *The Patriot*,[1] wherein

[1] The only dramatic piece called *The Patriot* that was in print in Steele's time was Gildon's tragedy (1703); and no such lines as those given here are to be found in it.

the great lord speaks to his friend, who applauds the bestowing of his bounty. The friend, taking notice of his conveying secretly relief to a distress'd person of great merit, and thinking to please him, tells him that the man obliged has found out who sent it, and said it was a God-like action. To which the answer:

"God-like indeed, could one bestow unseen!
Thanks are too large returns, from soul to soul,
For anything that we can handle thus:
Heaven has no more for giving us our all.
The means of sustenance man owes to man,
As angels give each other thought for thought."

Mr. Buskin, your most humble servant; mingle with the company.—Take your things. Say that in a doublet, cap, or waistcoat, with or without shoes, and make it little if you can. [*The crowd takes in* BUSKIN.

Hum. But I see you grow uneasy, to be diverted from your main design; I'll only trouble you with two circumstances, which to me appear very magnificent, tragical, and great: the one is a great favourite in a court, a man of consummate honour, who was surrounded with many difficulties and enemies. They got the better of him so far, as that he must be sacrificed unless he would open a letter which came by an error into his hand, but was directed to his enemy. He comes on in a soliloquy, but chooses to preserve his honour and abstain from opening it, and goes on to his ruin. He says but a word or two; but let him come.

Enter a TRAGEDIAN, *with a letter in his hand.*

Tragedian. "Here is my fate: 'tis put into my hands;
'Tis in my hands to take or to refuse;
I cannot open it but with loss of honour—
Be it for ever closed.
I cannot escape death; that will come soon or late;
'Tis in my power to make it find me innocent." [*Exit.*

Hum. You observe, Mr. Severn, here's no noise, no eclat, no bustle, but simple and calm greatness.—The next circumstance for which I beg your patience is that of a great English general, who, observing the confederate horse seized with a panic fear, and all, to a man, in the utmost disorder, assumes himself and mounts an eminence, and says he would stand there to revive the army. He did so; the enemies soon observed so remarkable an object, and cannonaded it. He stood the fury of their cannon while the army marched—But he comes on.

[*Drums and trumpets to precede his march.*]

Enter GENERAL.

Gen. "Nothing, but seeing me meet all they fear,
Can avert the same contagion from the troops.
Let them behold me die; or, what is more,
Let them behold how I expect to die!" [*Exit.*

Hum. It is allowable to help great thoughts, and alarm the audience with warlike instruments, to give the inattentive a sense of what is truly sublime. But I won't detain you longer; let us go in; but as we are going off a stage, let me repeat to you a couple of verses.

Would you reform an heedless guilty age,
Adorn with virtuous characters the stage.

ACT THE FOURTH.

Enter MR. PINCERS, *and* BARBER, *and* CONSTABLE.

IN. How do you say, sir? All this is a delusion! an imposition!

Barb. Perfectly so, sir; no otherwise, indeed, sir; and they have seized Mr. Constable there, my neighbour, who came into the house to keep the peace, when they were waging war in it.

Pin. What, lay hold upon a constable! detain the constable! Do they know what they do?

Barb. Ay, they know very well; but they don't care what they do.

Pin. And was the ghost a cheat, and calling this an inn all imposition?

Barb. Yes, sir; but here Mr. Constable has found below stairs an inlet into the house, and whence he can let in all the people of Drury Lane and the parts adjacent.

Pin. I have heard of Drury Lane in the country; but they will do as well as any for this purpose.

Barb. That is most excellent good luck; we will swing them for false imprisonment, and that of so great an officer as a constable.

Constable. But, sir, I want a warrant to do what I would on this occasion.

Pin. There need none, sir; you have the law, which will uphold you in it; the recovery of your liberty, and my liberty, as well as that of the barber, will support you. There is in your person the liberty of every man in England. As you are a constable concerned, I am a lawyer. I'll stand by you, I warrant you. But let's be silent before you bring in the *posse*. Take these deeds in your care and custody. [*Giving him deeds.*] Observe, Mr. Barber, I deliver them to him; and now let us go, or him go, and let in his people. [*Exit* CONSTABLE.] What a prodigious villainy was here, Mr. Barber! I placed such a confidence in this Mr. Severn, and took counsel with him for the disposal of my niece, and thus he has served me; but I have put my deeds relating to her into the constable's hand; and if he can let his *posse* into the house, I'll warrant you we will recover all.

[*A noise of people:*—"Beat down the doors; deliver the lady."]

Barb. Hark, hark! he has got them in, I warrant ye the *posse* is raised; I'll warrant we shall have the whole city and country on our side.

Pin. The whole matter is, how to conduct it legally. Let me be but of the council, and we will knock them all o' the head, and not transgress the law at all; we will murder the dogs, I would say the rogues. Why, what is there in it? they are no people, they are nobody in law; and if they are no people, to kill them is to kill nobody; for to fire at *fera natura*, creatures by nature wild—those animals are lawful game, and any man that has so much a year may kill them; so, Mr. Barber, any man may fire upon these fellows; these stage-players, who are no persons, have no right in themselves; and therefore any man may kill them.

[*A noise without:*—"Deliver the lady; give her to her guardian; give her to her uncle."]

Barb. They are just a-coming in; I know the neighbourhood and the constable; you shall direct us all.

Pin. Nay, I'll warrant you all shall be safely and legally done.

[*Enter a crowd of people.*]

Rabble. Where is the gentleman? where is the gentleman?

Barb. Here he is, gentlemen; and the players have taken his niece from him; and, for aught we know, they have ravished her; but, let it be so or no, we'll indict them for it. Harkee, Mr. Pincers, will an indictment for a rape lie in Drury Lane?

Pin. Lookee, gentlemen, we will fall upon them for taking her and her clothes; and then afterwards come upon them for the body, as we shall see cause; but we must find this body before we can do anything.

Barb. We will bear all down before us but we will find her. Down with all their sham heavens, their counterfeit seas; down with their false unsafe lands; down with their windmills and their dragons; burn their barns; and when we have got the lady, fire the house.—Come, follow the gentleman.

All. Ay, ay.

Pin. Huzza, huzza!

All. Huzza, huzza! [*Dog barks.*

1*st Rabble.* Don't mind their great dog; he barks a sham. He is no true dog. Unkennel the dog within. Harkee, neighbour, keep up your dogs—keep your dogs. Halloo, halloo!

2*nd Rabble.* Keep your dogs, gentlemen butchers; keep the dogs to charge their house. I'll warrant we'll spoil their battling, and rioting and fighting, and decoying all our daughters and nieces to see sights, and never

mind their business. Ho! the lady, the lady—we'll have the lady.

Barb. We'll make this young lady as famous as Helen of Troy was. We'll burn all before us for her sake. Come, let us hunt, let's see what's about this house in all its parts—halloo, hunt.

Pin. Let the constable march first; there's our safety, that's our security.—Take notice, I declare before all this company, it is in defence of this honest——

* * * * *

THE GENTLEMAN.

(A FRAGMENT.)

THE date of this fragment, which Nichols named *The Gentleman*, is uncertain ; it was first printed in 1809, together with *The School for Scandal*. The autograph MS. is in the British Museum (Add. MS. 5145c). Steele had written of high life below stairs in the *Spectator* (No. 88), where he says that menservants "are but in a lower degree what their masters themselves are ; and usually affect an imitation of their manners : And you have in liveries, beaux, fops, and coxcombs, in as high perfection as among people that keep equipages. It is a common humour among the retinue of people of quality when they are in their revels, that is when they are out of their master's sight, to assume in a humorous way the names and titles of those whose liveries they wear." He then describes their behaviour at an ordinary at Westminster, where he "heard the maid come down and tell the landlady at the bar that my Lord Bishop swore he would throw her out at window if she did not bring up more mild beer, and that my Lord Dick would have a double mug of purl." When news arrived that the House of Lords was rising, "down came all the company together, and away!" Servants were wont to congregate at the entrance to Hyde Park while the gentry were at the Ring. "There are men of wit in all conditions of life ; and mixing with those people at their diversions, I have heard coquets and prudes as well rallied, and insolence and pride exposed (allowing for their want of education), with as much humour and good sense as in the politest companies." (See page 281.)

THE GENTLEMAN.

Enter TOM DIMPLE *and* SIR HARRY SEVERN.

TOM: I'll serve you very faithfully in this particular, since you have a curiosity to pry into the affairs of us poor servants.

Sir Har. I think you are happier than we masters. But how do you contrive it, to be at a ball and masquerade of your own, all the time we are at ours, and yet be in readiness to attend when we break up or want you?

Tom. Sir, we leave sentries at all the places where you come out. All of us cannot expect to be at the diversion every night; but the forty or fifty who are to stay about the playhouse, or the person of quality's who entertains, send frequent expresses to us. Besides, I own to you, sir, that we find means to have tickets of our own, and can send in among you, by the help of them, when we please, and have warning enough of your motions. If we are a little too tardy, the coachmen can, when they think it convenient, make stops so as no one can stir, and keep everything in a ferment till all troops are come together.

Sir Har. You put me in mind of a great many things that have been till now unaccountable. Why, then, the sudden motion when we have been all locked fast, tearing and swearing, coachmen lashing, footmen bawling, and link-boys offering help to call chairs or coaches, and striving to lead or light you, is usually a hurry contrived and made up on purpose; and the sudden getting loose of one another, is only that the word is given, "all are come," "all is right"!

Tom. It is nothing else in the world.

Sir Har. But, then, how do you do for your habits and your music, and all the rest of the conveniences?

Tom. You have been so good and kind a master, that I'll hide nothing that may contribute to your diversion. We are in fee with the wardrobe keepers at the play-houses; and when the play is over, and all the parties concerned are disposed of, as you are at your diversions, the whole stock of clothes are in their hands; and they let them out for so many hours, and pack [them] up again with great order, and no harm done.

Sir Har. Well, well, now there is no mystery; there is nothing so easy, as all is safe without possibility of disappointment or surprise.—But as to what is to be done to-night——

Tom. This alehouse, where we all meet, is joining to a great house very well furnished; and the care of letting it is committed to our landlord. He has broken down a partition, which he can, in a day or two, make up again; and we have noble apartments for our entertainments, not inferior to those wherein our masters themselves are received.

Sir Har. You divert me extremely with this new scene of pleasure.

Tom. We shall be in our tip-top jollity to-night; all the lower world [will] be together to-night in as much pleasure as ever the upper themselves enjoyed.

Sir Har. What have you extraordinary at this time more than any other?

Tom. Our landlord is giving up[1] his business, and marries his daughter, Mrs. Jenny, my Lady Dainty's chambermaid, to the favourite footman of Sir John Plover, who is a great leader among us, and will keep and increase the custom of the house. But the humour is, no one is to know which is the bridegroom; for none but the girl herself [knows] which of the company is Sir John.

Sir Har. How! Sir John?

Tom. I should have told you that we always call one another by the names of our masters; and you must not be surprised at hearing me answer to your honour's to all who call to me; for, as I am a manager, and to be barefaced, I cannot disguise that *I* am *you*.

Sir Har. It is no matter if they will take me as readily for your fellow-servant.

Tom. They'll never suspect you for my master.—But here comes my landlord.

Landlord. Come, Sir Harry, Sir Harry, 'tis past nine o'clock; the company is coming—they have put all in at the masquerade and the assemblies.

Tom. [*Whispering* SIR HARRY.] As I am barefaced, you can come to me when you please, when you are at a loss.—But you see I must attend my charge.

Sir Har. I beg your pardon; I'll interrupt you no more; but if I like—you understand.

Tom. You know my skill and diligence, my good master; but adieu.—Landlord, you see the house fills; let all the waiters be ready; pipes, tobacco, bread, cheese and the like, for those who are in habits proper for such coarse fare. What! none of the stewards ready but myself?

[1] The MS. has "off."

Enter three others with wands, barefaced.

2nd Steward. Ay, ay, here we are—here we are.

3rd Steward. We stayed only till we saw some quality figures coming in.

2nd Steward. Look you, how we are overrun with nymphs and shepherds!—But look, look! there is some sense in those stalking things, which move like pageants, and are not of human shape.

1st Steward. Right, they cannot be out in their parts—there are no such things in nature—but patched-up beings, out of mere fancy and imagination.

3rd Steward. But have a care, ladies, shepherdesses, nymphs; run, run—Here, here is a dragon that devours virgins, as a pike does small fish.

2nd Steward. Have a care—here he comes, here he come—he eats all virgins without mercy, but will touch nobody else.

Several women's voices together.

Let him come, let him come.

An old withered MAID, *crying out.*

Old Maid. Have a care, have a care, have a care; let me get off, let me get off; oh me—oh me!

[*Running off.*

Figure of St. George—DICKY, *borne on a war-horse.*

Dicky. Fear not, fair one, fear not. I am St. George, I'll save thee.

DRAGON *and* ST. GEORGE *fight.*

The crowd cry out. Ho-boy, St. George! Ho-boy, dragon!—there's the knight of the world.

1st Masquer. Hear, hear, the knight is going to speak. As he's stout, he's merciful. He is going to give the dragon his life—no, no, he's going to speak to him.

Constable. Hold, hold, sir knight; the dragon's my neighbour—he's a tailor in my neighbourhood.

2nd Masquer. Open the dragon; open the dragon; keep the peace; take out the tailor.

Lawyer Masquer. Take care what you do; take care what you do. If he is a denizen, the law is very severe.—Though there are nine to make up a man, by a fiction of law it is murder to kill any one of them: the law supposes him a whole man.

1st Steward. Ho! Mr. Fly-flap, Mr. Wardrobe-keeper, give the company an account of the knight and of his horse.

Wardrobe-keeper. This is the poet's horse that trod down all the persons who have been killed in tragedy ever since I came to the house. The gentleman that rides him has some verses about him, if he would speak them.

Many Masquers. Hear, hear!—Hear the verses!

St. George. On this bold steed, with this dead-doing arm,
Without art magic, help of draught or charm,
Crowds have I slain, and routed from the field,
Or made, as captives, to my mercy yield.
My horse and me none could escape by flying,
But saved their lives by well dissembled dying.

Cobbler Masquer. Very well, very well, i'faith. Look ye, look ye, gentlemen, I know the humour of that. I live just by in Vinegar Yard, and I know the humour of that. You must know he means by that—that by pretending to be dead, the men whom the valiant man in the play rides over, or cuts down, are carried [off] safe and sound. Why, I have been called in, when there has been a great battle in the house, to help to carry off the dead; and I have brought a man off dead over-night, and mended his shoes next morning.

4th Masquer. Ho, brave Crispin!—that's a good jest, i'faith.

Cobbler. But my wife said a very good thing upon that. "Look thee, Will," said she, for you must know my name is William, "we shall never make anything of this, if we are to wait for dead men's shoes."

4th Masquer. Ho-boy, Crispin! Thou art a merry rogue, Crispin!

* * * *

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.[1]

I.

STEELE *v.* RICH.

(Pages xxviii—xxx.)

PLAINTIFF'S BILL.[2]

3^o^ die Julii 1707.

To the right hon^ble^ William Lord Cowper Baron of Wingham Lord high Chancellor of Great Brittaine

Humbly Complaining, Sheweth unto y^r^ Lordship your Orator Richard Steele of Westm^er^ Gent That your Orat^r^ haveing writt Severall Comedyes & Playes at the request of & for Christopher Rich Esq^r^ for the use of the Theater or Playhouse in or near Bridges Street in Covent Garden in the County of Midd^x^ of which playhouse the said Christopher Rich was & is cheife Patentee or has an assignm^t^ or some other Conveyance of the Patent thereof or otherwise hath the cheife Interest therein and the

[1] The documents printed in this Appendix are taken from my *Life of Steele*, 1889, in order to illustrate, more fully than was possible in the Introduction, Steele's relations with the theatre at different periods.

[2] Chancery Proceedings (Pub. Rec. Office), B and A. Hamilton, IV., before 1714, No. 642.

pfitts ariseing from the acting of Playes there He the said Christopher Rich to induce your Orator to write further for him on or about the Month of December in the year of our Lord one Thousand seaven hundred & two advanced & payd to your Orat^or^ the Sum̃e of Seaventy & two pounds upon this Agreement then or about that time made between them That your Orator should bring to him the said Christopher Rich & for his use the next Comedy your Orator Should be the Author of and out of the Profitts when the same should come to be acted that belonged to your Orator as the Author according to the Usage and Custome in such Cases he the said Christopher Rich was to deduct & pay himself for the said seaventy & two pounds and Interest thereof and in the meane time for the said Christopher Rich's security your Orator was p̃vailed with to give and accordingly did give his bond of one hundred forty and four pounds penalty condiconed for the payment of the said seaventy two pounds and alsoe a Warrant of Attorney to enter up Judgment on the said bond to him the said Christopher Rich And afterwards (viz.) sometime in or about the Month of Aprill in the Year of our Lord one thousand seaven hundred & four[1] your Orator being the Author of the Comedy called the Tender Husband he did bring to and deliver into the hands of the said Christopher Rich the said Comedy being the next Comedy your Orator was author of and it being then in an ill season of the Year and your Orator being therefore unwilling to have it then acted the said Christopher Rich promised to & agreed with your Orator that it should not be to your Orator's losse or Detriment but that your Orator should have assigned to him the profitts of Two Nights made by

[1] There is a curious mistake in the date of the *Tender Husband* throughout Steele's Bill. As we have seen, it was first produced in April, 1705. There are several allusions in the play to the battle of Blenheim, which was not fought until August, 1704.

acting of the said Play the next following Winter in Lieu of his Two dayes Profitts according to the Usage & Custome in such case And the said Christopher Rich did cause the said Comedy or Play to be acted on the said Theatre in or about the Month of Aprill & year one thousand seaven hundred & four aforesaid And severall dayes in the Autumne or Winter following which proved very successefull and the said Christopher Rich made & received great profitt thereby And by the Agreement aforesaid and accordinge to Usage & Custome in the like Cases your Orator was to have the whole profitts of the first third day it was acted in Autumne or Winter aforesaid without any diduccon of Charges of Acting and alsoe of the second third day or Sixth day it was acted on as aforesaid diducting only the charges of Acting Which profitts of the said two dayes came to the hands of & was received by the said Christopher Rich and was more than sufficient to pay & satisfye the said Seaventy two pounds & Interest Whereupon your Orator expected as he had reason that the said Christopher Rich would have delivered up to your Orator the said bond & acknowledged satisfaccon on the Record of the Judgment which the said Christopher Rich had caused to be Entred upon Record against your Orator and would have payd your Orator what was over & above the said seaventy Two pounds & Interest thereof—But now soe it is May it please your Lordship That the said Christopher Rich minding to oppresse your Orator and extort great sum̃es of Mony from him refuses to allowe your Orator the profitts of the said two dayes Acting in Autumne or Winter following according to his Agreement or any dayes profitts or any other profitt whatsoever in consideracon of the said Comedy or Play but threatens to Sue your Orator on the said Judgment & take your Orator in Execucon for the same and hath caused a Scire facias or some other Suite or accon to be com̃enced

against your Orator on the said Judgment[1] In Tender Consideracon of all which p̄misses & for as much as your Orator can have noe releife therein save in a Court of Equity and for that your Orator's witnesses who could prove all & singular the premisses are either dead or in parts beyond the Seas or in other parts remote & to your Orator unknown To the end therefore that the said Christopher Rich may true & perfect answare make to all and singular the premisses as if here againe particularly interrogated and charged and in a more particular manner sett forth & discover what Playes your Orator hath brought & delivered to him & for his use And whether he did not advance & pay your Orator the said sum̄e of seaventy two pounds upon such Agreement as aforesaid

[1] In Easter term, 1707, the Queen sent her writ to the Sheriff of Middlesex in these words: Whereas Christopher Rich, Esq., in our Court at Westminster by our writ and by judgment of the said Court recovered against Richard Steele, gentleman, *alias* Richard Steele of the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, gentleman, £144 of debt, also 53s. for his damages, whereof Richard is convicted as is manifest to us by the Records: Now on the part of the said Christopher we understand that in spite of the judgment aforesaid the debt and damages still remain unpaid, wherefore Christopher prays us to give him a suitable remedy. We willing to do what is just in the matter command you by honest men of your bailiwick to cause Richard to know that he is to come before us at Westminster on Wednesday next after the Quindene of Easter to show if he knows or can say anything in bar of execution why Christopher may not have execution of his debt and damages, according to the force, form, and effect of recovery, if he shall think proper, and further to do and receive what the Court shall consider to be just in the matter.—On the 12th February, 5 Anne (170⁶⁄₇), at Westminster, Christopher came, and the Sheriff acknowledged that Richard has nothing in his bailiwick by which he could cause him to know, &c. [*i.e.*, he had no property to which he could affix the notice]. Richard did not come; therefore it was commanded to the Sheriff to make known to him that he was to be before the Queen at Westminster on Wednesday next after the month of Easter, to show if, &c., and further, &c. The same day was given to Christopher, whereupon he came, and the Sheriff again acknowledged that Richard had nothing, &c., but Richard did not come. It was therefore considered that Christopher might have execution against him of debts and damages, according to the form and effect of the recovery aforesaid (Queen's Bench Judgment Roll, Easter 6 Anne, 375). I have not found the original judgment here referred to.

or upon what other Termes or Agreement and whether your Orator did not bring and deliver to him for his use the said Comedy or Play called the Tender Husband and when the same was soe given or delivered as aforesaid & whether he & your Orator did not come to such agreement for your Orator's share of the profitts of the said play as aforesaid and what other Agreement was made between him and your Orator about itt and how often the same play was acted in the sum̃er of the said Year one thousand seaven hundred & four & how often in the autumne or Winter of that year and whether your Orator was not to have been allowed all or any and what profitts of any & what days and what & how much he the said Christopher Rich hath received of the said profitts and that the said Christopher Rich may come to an account with your Orator and that the said bond may be delivered up to your Orator and the said Christopher Rich may acknowledge satisfacion of Record on the said Judgment and your Orator may have what is over and above the payment of the said seaventy two pounds and Interest payd to him and may be further relieved in all & singular the premisses according to Equity & good Conscience & that in the Meantime all his vexatious proceedings att Law against your Orator may be stayed by the Injuncon of this hon^rble^ Court May it please your Lordship to grant unto your Orator her Maj^tyes^ most gracious writt of Spa to the said Christopher Rich directed therein & thereby commanding him personally to be & appeare before your Lordship in this hon^rble^ Court at a certaine day & place therein to be limited & appointed to true & perfect answare make to all & singular the premisses and further to stand to abide & obey such Order & Decree as your Lordship shall think fitt to make touching the premisses And your Orator shall ever pray etc.

Jn° Squibb.

Rawling.

DEFENDANT'S ANSWER.

Jurat 9 die Novembris 1707 Coram me Jo: Edisbury.

The Answere of Christopher Rich Esq^r^ Deft to the bill of Complaynt of Richard Steele gent Complaynant.

This deft now & att all times hereafter saveing & receiving to himselfe all & all manner of Benefitt & advantage of Exeption that may be had or taken to the manyfold Errors untruthes unsufficiencies & Imperfections in the Complaynant's said Bill of Complaynt conteyned ffor answere thereunto or unto as much thereof as this Defend^t^ is advised is any wise materiall for him this Deft to make answere unto Hee this Deft answereth and sayth That this Deft being one of the Assignees of the patents of the Theatre or Playhouse in or neare Bridges Street in Covent Garden as the Complt's Bill menconed and of one other Theatre or Playhouse in Dorsett Garden London and owner of part of the shares or profitts arising by acting (if any) To his owne use the Complaynant in or about the month of October in the yeare of our Lord One thousand seaven hundred and one brought a Comedy or play to this Defend^t^ which he the Complaynant alleadged he had written and stiled the ffunerall for which he the Complaynant came to an Agreement with this Defend^t^ in writing on about the Ninth day of October Anno Dni 1701 and thereby for the Consideracon therein menconed sold the same to this Deft to be acted by the Actors under this Deft's Government as soone as they could conveniently which Comedy was soone after acted in pursueance of the said Agreement and the said Complaynant was paid and satisfyed in full according to the Conditions and the tenor and true Intent of the said Agreement and to the Content and Satisfaccon of him the Complt as he acknowledged and declared and this Deft is informed and believeth that he the Complt gave

a Receipt to Mr Zachary Baggs[1] the then and [illegible] Treasurer of the said Company for his the Complayn profitts arising by acting of the said Comedy by vertue of the Agreement aforesaid And this Defendt further sayth that the Complaynt in or about the month of January Anno Dni 1702[2] inforeming this Defendt that he had neare finished another Comedy which he intended to call the Election of Goatham he proposed to sell the same to this Deft and accordingly in or by a certaine writing or Agreement beareing date on or about the Seaventh of January Anno Dni 170$\frac{3}{4}$ signed by the Complaynant in Consideracon of one shilling to him the Complt then paid by this deft and for the Consideracon therein and herein after menconed he the said Complaynant did sell or is therein or thereby menconed to sell unto this Defendt his heires and assignes A Certaine Comedy which he the Complaynt was then writing called the Election of Goatham and which he was to deliver to this Defendt on or about the Twentyeth day of ffebruary then next in order to be acted by the Company of Actors under this Defendts Governmt assoone as they could conveniently[3] In Consideracon whereof the said Complaynt was to have all the Receipts of the third day on which the said play should be acted Hee the Complt paying out of the same all the Charges of the house both constant and Incident But if the Receipts on the ffourth day should double the Charges thereof then the Charges of the third should be returned to him and he thereby obliged himselfe to make good the Charges of the second day out of the profitts of

[1] Baggs commenced an action for debt against Steele in the Court of Queen's Bench in Michaelmas term, 1707, claiming damages of £15.

[2] 1703, N.S.

[3] The *Examiner* for October 12, 1713, evidently written by some one well acquainted with Steele's affairs, said, "I and the Upholsterer retired to the bench and parade in the Park, not doubting but your Author would finish his rough draught of the *Election at Goatham*, according to agreement with Mr. Rich."

the third day in case the Charges of the second day should not arise to soe much Item if the Receipts on the ffourth day of acting the said play should amount to fforty pounds or upwards the said Company was to act it the ffifth day and if the ffifth dayes Receipts should be fforty pounds Then they were to act it the sixth day for the Benefitt of the Complaynt Hee paying out of the same the Charges of that day But if att any time there should appeare Reason to doubt whether the play would bring Chardges or not Then the Company should not be obliged to act it the next day unlesse he the Complaynt would oblige himselfe to make good the full charges And lastly the Complaynant was not to print the said play untill a month should be expired from the ffirst day it should be acted and three of the printed Books in Marble paper Covers and Gilt edges were to be delivered into the office for the use of the patentees assoone as the same should bee printed (As in and by the said Agreemt in Writing last menconed under the hand of the said Complaynt and to which this Defendt for more Certainty referreth himselfe ready to be produced to this honoble Court may appeare) And this deft sayth that there being a ffreindship contracted between him the Complt and this Deft and the Complt expressing greate kindnesse to this Deft and telling him of his the Complts want of Money and of his being likely to be arrested for moneys oweing by him prevayled with this Deft to advance lend and pay to him the Complt and to his use the Sume of Seaventy and Two pounds And he the Complaynant in or by one Bond or Obligacon bearinge date on or about the Seaventh day of January Anno Dni 1702[1] became bound unto this Defent in the penall Sume of One Hundred fforty and ffower pounds Conditioned for the payment of the said Seaventy and two pounds with Interest on the Eighth day of March then next And alsoe

[1] 1703, N.S.

he the Complt executed a Warrant of Attorney to confesse a Judgem[t] upon the said Bond in the Court of Queen's Bench att Westm[r] which Judgement was Entred up accordingly as by the said Bond Warrant of Attorney and the Record of the said Judgement and to which this Defend[t] referreth himselfe may appeare And this defend[t] sayth that he the Complt Steele as an Additional Security for the better payment of the said Debt did by a writing under his hand beareing date the Seaventh day of January Anno Dni 1702[1] assigne and sett over or is therein menconed to assigne and sett over unto this Deft all the Money and profitts which was or were to come to him the Complt for his play intended to be called the Eleccon of Goatham by the Agreem[t] therein before written upon this Condition That if the said debt should not be paid unto this Deft before the acting of the said play That then this deft his Executors or assignes might retaine and apply such profitts for or towards paym[t] of the said debt of Seaventy and two pounds with damages But if such profitts should amount to more moneys then should be due to this Deft or his assignes att the time of acting such play then the Overplus of the moneys and profitts arising due to the Complaynant on his play by the agreem[t] aforesaid was to goe to the use of the Complt and his assignes after payment of the aforesaid debt with damages to this deft and his assignes as by an Agreement in writing under the hand of the Complt bearing date the said Seaventh day of January Anno Dni 1702[2] ready to be produced to this honoble Court and to which this deft alsoe referreth himselfe may appeare And this deft sayth that the Complt did not pay or cause to be paid unto this deft the said debt of seaventy and two pounds or any part thereof or any Interest for the same according to the Condition of the said recited Bond on the Eighth day of March next after the date thereof nor hath he ever

[1] 1703, N.S. [2] 1703, N.S.

since paid the said debt or any part thereof or any Interest for the same to this deft And this deft sayth that he the Complt did not deliver to this deft the said Comedy sold as aforesaid to this deft by the writing before menconed to beare date the seaventh of January Anno Dni 170⅔ on the twentyeth of ffebruary then nex as thereby was mentioned nor hath he the Complt ever since that time delivered to this deft any Comedy called the Election of Goatham altho this deft very often requested him the Complt for the same But this deft confesseth that the Complt about the latter end of March Anno Dni 1705 brought a Comedy to this deft which he stiled or called the Tender Husband or the accomplished ffooles & desired and urged this deft and his cheife Actors that the same might be acted by them with all speed which he the Complt said was in leiu and in stead of the said play which he intended to have called the Election of Goatham and the same was the next and onely play or Comedy which the Complt has brought sold and delivered to this deft since the lending of the said Seaventy Two pounds as aforesaid And this deft Beleiveth that his this defts Company of Actors did according to his the Complts desire gett up the said Comedy called the Tender Husband with all the speed they could and acted the same the first time on the three & twentyeth of Aprill 1705 and acted the same the second time the next day after and the third time on Wednesday the five and twentyth of the same month of Aprill for the Benefitt of the Complt the Author according to the same Conditions in the said ffirst and second Agreements menconed and acted the same the ffourth time on the next day after being Thursday the sixth and twentyeth of Aprill 1705; on which day the Receipts being but Twenty Six pounds and Eleaven shillings as this deft beleives the same was thirteen pounds and Nine shillings short or wanting of fforty pounds the continge nt

in the said agreement menconed This deft was not obliged by the said Articles or any Agreement to cause the same to be acted on the Sixth day or any more for the Benefitt of the Complayn^{t} save as hereinafter is menconed And this deft sayth that the said M^{r} Baggs the Treasurer computing each dayes charge of acting the said play called the Tender Husband to amount to Thirty Eight pounds ffifteen shillings and Ten pence and the Receipts of the third day being Sixty one pounds and six shillings & noe more as this deft beleives out of which the said Sume of Thirty Eight pounds ffifteen shillings and ten pence being deducted there then rested two and twenty pounds ten shillings and two pence as this Deft computes the sume But the Receipts of the second day of acting the same play amounting to but twenty and six pounds and ffourteen shillings being deficient Twelve pounds one shilling and ten pence to make up the charge of that day which twelve pounds one shilling and Ten pence being deducted out of the said two and twenty pounds and ten shillings the Residue of Neate and cleere profitts to come to the Complt pursueant to the Agreement aforesaid amounted to Ten pounds Eight shillings and two pence and noe more as this Deft is informed and beleives with which this deft beleives the Complt was acquainted and that he was well contented and satisfyed with the account given to him the Complt of the Receipts and Charges of and for the said play called the Tender Husband for the ffower ffirst dayes of acting thereof And this Deft sayth that the profitt accrewing due to the Complaynant being soe small the Complaynant applyed himselfe to this deft and alsoe to the principall Actors under this deft's Government That he the Complt would waive his profitt by the said play being Ten pounds Eight shillings and two pence as aforesaid and permitt the same to goe to the use of the Company provided they would act the said play the then next Winter

one day for his the said Complt's Benefit instead of the third day aforesaid he paying or allowing out of the Receipts on such day in Winter the constant and incident charge thereof and alsoe what money the Receipts on the said second day of acting the said play wanted to make up the full charge for that day being Twelve pounds one shilling and ten pence as aforesaid which this deft as well as most of the Cheife Actors Consented to or to such effect And thereupon the said Treasurer made the full Receipts on the third day of acting the said play called the Tender Husband to be charged for the use of the Company without chargeing any part thereof paid to the Complaynant in regard the Complaynant refused to receive the profitts due to him for that day But chose to have a day in Winter in Leiu thereof as aforesaid And this deft sayth that in pursueance of such Request made by the Complt to this deft and the Cheife actors as aforesaid a day was appoynted in the winter following according as the Complaynant desired and Bills were sett up the day before it was to have been acted and it was ordered by this deft to be geven out that Night and Bills putt up for the same to be acted the next day for the Author's Benefitt ; But a little before it was to have been given out the Complt forbidd the same to be given out on the Stage or putt into the Bills for his Benefitt saying that he did not thinke there would be such an Audience att it as would please him or used words to some such or the like Effect But how ever the same play was acted on the then next day and the whole Receipts that day being Thursday the Twentyeth of November[1] one thousand seaven hundred and ffive amounted to sixty ffower pounds three shillings and Six pence and noe more (as this deft beleives & is informed by the said Treasurer) which was about two pounds seaventeen shillings more then the

[1] There is some mistake in this date. On November 20, 1705, the *Bassett Table* was acted for the first time.

Receipts came to on the said third day that the same play was acted as aforesaid which two pounds seaventeen shillings and Six pence this deft and the said principal Actors were willing should be paid to the said Complt as well as the sume of Ten pounds Eight shillings and two pence before menconed And this deft sayth that as to the Ten pounds Eight shillings and two pence which was due to the Complt out of the Receipts of the said third day according to the Agreement before menconed this deft never received the same or any part thereof nor the said two pounds seaventeen shillings and six pence But both the said Sumes remaine in the said Treasurers hands for the use of the Complt as this deft beleives And this deft gave order to the said Mr Baggs the Treasurer to pay the same to the Complaynant amounting together to Thirteen pounds ffive shillings and Eight pence as this deft computes the same And this deft beleives that Mr Baggs hath severall times offered to pay the same to the Complt and is still ready to doe the same But that he the Complt hath neglected or refused to receive the same as the said Treasurer has informed this deft And this deft denyeth that the said play called the Tender Husband was acted att any time in the yeare one thousand seaven Hundred and ffower either in the Summer or Winter as in the Complt's Bill is suggested But the first time the same was acted was on the said three & twentyeth of Aprill Anno Dni 1705 as this Deft verily Beleives and as is before sett forth And this deft denyeth that he this deft ever made any other agreement with the Complt touching or concerning the Comedyes or Playes before menconed or either of them other than as is herein before sett forth And this deft denyeth that he lent the said Seaventy two pounds upon any other agreement then as aforesaid and Sayth that he this deft did never agree to stay for the said debt untill the Complt should bring the said play called the Eleccon of Goatham or any other play to this

deft And this deft denyes that he was or is minded to Oppresse the Complt and extort greate Sumes of money from him and not allow the Complt any profitt whatsoever in Consideracon of the said Comedy called the tender Husband which Comedy as this deft hath been informed and beleives hath been severall times acted in the last yeare by the Company of Actors in the playhouse in the Hay Markett[1] without this deft's consent or direccion & in Opposition to this deft's Interest which this deft has reason to beleive was soe done by the Incouragement or att least the Conniveance of the Complt But what Benefitt or profitt the Complt hath had from thence for the same this deft doth not know And this deft Confesseth that the Complt haveing for a long time delayed the payment of the said debt of seaventy two pounds with Interest and Damages to this deft and not keeping his promises touching the same this deft hath caused prosecucon to be made against Complt for Recovery of the said debt with Interest & damages which this deft humbly insists was & is lawfull for him to doe and humbly hopes this honoble Court will not hinder him therein & this deft denyeth all and manner of unlawfull combinacon & Confederacy for any the ends or purposes in the Complt's Bill menconed without that that [*sic*] there is any other matter or thing Clause Sentence or allegacon in the Complt's said Bill of Complaynt conteyned materiall & effectual in the Law for him this deft to make answere unto and not herein and hereby well and sufficiently answered unto confessed or avoyded traversed or denyed is true to the knowledge of this Deft all which

[1] "Never acted there before. At the desire of severall Ladies of Quality. By her Majesty's Company of Comedians. At the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket, this presant Saturday being the 7th of December [1706] will be presented a Comedy, called The Tender Husband or the Accomplished Fools." The Play was repeated at the Haymarket Theatre on Monday, Dec. 9th, and on Feb. 25th 1707, "for the benefit of Mrs. Oldfield" (*Daily Courant* passim).

matters & things this Deſt is and shall be ready to averre justifye maintaine and prove as this honoble Court shall direct & humbly prayes to be hence dismissed with his Reasonable Costes & Charges in this behalfe most wrongfully susteyned

TURNER JOHN METCALFE

II.

STEELE *v.* WILBRAHAM, &c., 1722.

(Page liii.)

STEELE'S bill,[1] after referring to the Letters Patent of the 14th January 1714—15, and to the agreement then made by Steele with Wilks, Cibber, and Booth, proceeds to state that in or about 1713 Steele had contracted an acquaintance with Edward Minshull, Esq., of the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, who professed great friendship, and offered to help Steele to money to supply his then urgent occasions. The offer being accepted, Minshull became bound with Steele to one Cox for £500 or thereabouts, and to one Aston[2] for £400 or thereabouts, and to some other persons, of whom he borrowed, as he pretended, money to lend Steele; and he lent Steele at several times some small sums, and about the 24th July 1716 desired Steele to give him some security for the money he had lent to and stood engaged to pay for Steele, all which he then pretended to compute at £1500 and more; and particularly he desired that a security might be made to him of Steele's fifth part of the Letters Patent and of the clothes, scenes, &c., and of the profits of the Theatre in Drury Lane; and Steele

[1] Chancery Proceedings, Zincke, 1714-58, No. 1424.

[2] Robert Aston brought an action against Steele for debt in Michaelmas term, 1716.

having a good opinion of Minshull's integrity, and believing the account made out to be true, readily agreed to make such security, whereupon Minshull got and prepared an assignment of Steele's share to him, his executors and assigns, dated the said 24th July 1716, the consideration whereof was expressed to be the sum of £1500 paid to Steele; but in truth there was not any sum then paid to Steele, nor were the debts for which Minshull was bound then paid, nor was any account then drawn out or settled between Steele and Minshull. And at the same time Minshull signed a defeasance to Steele, that upon payment of the £1500 and interest at a day therein mentioned the said assignment should be void; and Steele thereupon directed Castleman, Treasurer of the Theatre, to pay his share to Minshull or his order. And there having been great dealings between Minshull and Charles Gery, Esq., of London, of whom Minshull had at times borrowed several sums on several securities, and Minshull proposing to assign over the security from Steele, Gery insisted that Steele should join in the assignment; but Minshull declared there was no occasion for it, and that Steele should make affidavit that he had no otherwise encumbered his share in the Theatre; and Gery being satisfied with this, Minshull told Steele that he was much pressed for the payment of the debts to Cox and Aston, and that he must raise money on Steele's assignment to discharge those debts, and that for that purpose the affidavit must be made, to which Steele consented. And some time afterwards, as Steele had been lately informed, Minshull assigned the security to Gery, but Steele could not discover what money was paid by Gery. Minshull endorsed Steele's note to Castleman, and gave it to Gery, who received several sums from Castleman. Minshull and Gery formed at that time a design to get Steele's share of the scenes, clothes, and profits; and Minshull undertook to purchase the same absolutely of Steele for

£4000, which it was agreed between Minshull and Gery should be for their joint and equal benefit; but the £4000 was to be paid by Gery, and £2000 repaid by Minshull as he could raise the same out of his moiety of the profits; and this agreement was marked in the assignment made by Minshull to Gery, or in some other deed or writing between them. Minshull then often requested Steele to sell his share, but being unsuccessful he said he perceived Steele was in straits for money, and that it would be proper for Steele to raise a considerable sum at once, and professed that he would advance a further sum of £2500 upon the security of the said premises, and allow Steele two years for the payment thereof. This Steele accepted, and Minshull being in daily expectation, as he pretended, of receiving £3000, or some such sum, directions were given by him to Mr. Ralph Wilbraham, his attorney, to draw up an assignment to him of Steele's share, which Wilbraham accordingly got drawn up and engrossed. It was dated on or about the 31st January 1716[-7], and was made absolute, Minshull undertaking to give Steele a defeasance thereof in payment of the said £4000 and interest within two years of the date thereof. And this assignment being drawn and engrossed, Minshull and Wilbraham came to Steele, who was then attending the service of his country in the House of Commons, and carried him to the Horn Tavern, in the Palace Yard, Westminster, and after the assignment was read over, Minshull, speaking with Steele in another room, said that, being disappointed of money, he could not pay Steele any part of the said £2500, but would in a few days, and in the meantime would give a note for the money, and that for Steele's security the assignment should remain in Wilbraham's hands till the sum was paid, and that he (Minshull) would execute a proper defeasance to Steele. Steele, being ignorant of matters of law, spoke to Wilbraham, who

assured him that he would receive no prejudice thereby, adding that he (Wilbraham) was obliged to take extraordinary care that Steele should not suffer because Steele put such great confidence in him.[1] Steele was thus, at the earnest request of Minshull and Wilbraham, induced to sign the assignment of the 31st January 1717, and to sign a receipt endorsed on the back of the paper for the sum of £4000 as the consideration thereof; and Wilbraham was a witness that Steele executed this assignment and signed the receipt, well knowing that not one penny was advanced as the consideration thereof, and that the same was only to be security for the £1500 for which the former assignment was given, and the £2500 when the same should be paid to Steele, and for which Minshull then gave Steele a receipt, Wilbraham being a witness; and Wilbraham assured Steele that this receipt would screen him from any prejudice by signing the receipt for £4000, and that if the £2500 were not paid to Steele, by virtue of the said receipt for £2500, Steele would be entitled to an allowance thereof out of the £4000. By agreement between Steele and Minshull the assignment of the 31st January 1717 was then deposited in the hands of Wilbraham as a common trustee between them, until the £2500 should be paid to Steele and a proper defeasance executed by Minshull; and until that was done no use was to be made of the assignment, and then Steele's former assignment for £1500 was also to be delivered up to him. And Steele requiring some further memorandum from Wilbraham of such trust,

[1] The following memorandum, in Steele's writing, is among the Blenheim MSS.: "Whereas S^r R: S: has made a Sale of His income and interest in a Patent of the" . . . (some words illegible) "an absolute sale in Words yet it was never intended nor should be ever insisted upon as a sale in fact, but that when the money lent by M^r Minshull should be repaid to Him, the Instruments of Sale and all other deeds or securities should be rescinded and made void and ineffectual in what proper manner S^r Richard Steele should require either before or after the time limited in the said instruments."

Wilbraham wrote a short memorandum, acknowledging that he had received the indenture of the 31st January, purporting a sale from Steele to Minshull of the fifth part of the Letters Patent, scenes, clothes, &c., and profits in consideration of £4000, which Deed was deposited in his hands in order that in case Steele, his executors, &c., should redeem the same within two years, the same should be delivered up to be cancelled and destroyed; and this he promised to do, unless the Deed were lost by fire or other unavoidable accident. Wilbraham and Minshull witnessed this memorandum by affixing their signatures; and Steele depended upon Minshull's Note, and Wilbraham's memorandum, and Wilbraham's privity to and knowledge of the whole affair, and the Deed being kept by Wilbraham, so that there should be no prejudice to Steele, that the £2500 would have been paid, and the former assignment delivered up; and he therefore then delivered his counterpart and defeasance thereof to Minshull. And Minshull, or Gery at his order, continued by virtue of the first assignment of July 1716 to receive Steele's fifth part of the profits; but Minshull never paid Steele the £2500, to the very great disappointment of Steele, who, depending upon the same, was reduced to great straits, and therefore desired Minshull would supply him with some part of it; this Minshull agreed to do if Steele would consent that the agreement in Wilbraham's hands should remain as security for such further sums as Minshull should advance beyond the £1500 for which the first security was given. Steele consented, being desirous that whatever money was really advanced to him should be repaid with interest; and thereupon Minshull supplied several sums and paid several sums for Steele; and Gery received out of Steele's share of the profits £2398 16s. 10d., or some such sum; and Steele's share was received by Minshull, or his order, Gery, for the years 1716 and 1717, to the amount of £1418.

Having paid to Minshull by one Mr. Paterson £400, Steele desired Minshull, on or about the 22nd October, to state accounts with him, which Minshull did, and notwithstanding the debt of Aston was included in the first security for £1500, yet Minshull charged Steele with the sum of £47 8s. for the costs thereof, and also with several sums over and above the £1500, the total of one account amounting to £768 19s. 9d., and the total of the other to £712 5s. 10d., so that on the whole Minshull charged Steele as debtor for £3029 3s. 7d., and at the same time gave Steele credit for £1418 received of Castleman and £400 received of Paterson, whereby there was a balance of £1211 3s. 7d. due from Steele to Minshull, as will appear by the said account signed by Minshull and Steele; and Gery was privy to the stating of this account, and continued by virtue of Steele's note endorsed by Minshull to receive Steele's share of the profits until the 24th January 1719, and received thereby £348. There remained then due to Minshull for principal and interest only £886 16s. 6d. or thereabouts, but Steele tendered to Minshull £900, and demanded the assignment for £4000, and also the assignment for £1500, which Minshull pretended he had long before redeemed, and often promised to deliver to Steele, and had received back the defeasance and counterpart from Steele, and also Steele's note to Castleman. Minshull sent to Wilbraham's house for the said assignment, but Wilbraham being out of town or from home, Minshull desired the matter might be put off to another opportunity, and that in the meantime he might continue to receive the profits belonging to Steele, the same to be afterwards deducted out of the said £886 16s. 6d. To this Steele agreed; and on the 4th February 1719 paid Minshull the further sum of £300. And afterwards, on or about the 16th November 1719, Gery, by virtue of Steele's note, received the further sum of £238; but Minshull had in the mean-

time paid to and for Steele some other sums, so that, on the 11th December 1719, there remained due from Steele to Minshull £596 2s. 9d.; and thereupon Minshull by a writing dated the said 11th December declared that Steele before the expiration of two years from the 31st January 1717 tendered to him full satisfaction for the consideration money mentioned to be advanced to Steele by the said deed of sale, but that he (Minshull) could not then come at the deed by reason of Wilbraham not being at home when he sent for it, and therefore he desired Wilbraham by this writing to deliver up to Steele or his order the deed dated 31st January 1717 on payment of the sum of £596 2s. 9d., that being all the money then due to Minshull. Steele sent this writing to Wilbraham, offering to pay the £596 2s. 9d., and well hoped the deed would have been delivered up to him, and that the other assignment of the 24th July 1716, and the order to Castleman, would have been delivered up by Minshull. But now Minshull, Wilbraham, and Gery, combining together, and with William Woolley, Esq., of the county of Derby, and with others as yet unknown, to defraud Steele of his share in the Theatre, Wilbraham utterly refused to deliver up the deed of assignment of the 31st January 1717, but threatened to deliver it to Gery, with whom he entered into an agreement for that purpose; and Gery insisted that there was due to him from Steele £2500 or some such great sum, and that Steele's fifth share ought to be charged therewith; and to cover these unjust proceedings he pretended that he advanced £1500 to Minshull upon Minshull assigning over to him Steele's security of the 24th July 1716, and that on the 31st January 1717 he advanced to Minshull the further sum of £2500, and that Minshull paid the same to Steele; and that by a deed poll dated on or about the 31st January 1717, Minshull declared that the £4000 mentioned to be the consideration money of the said deed of

sale of that date was the proper money of Gery, Minshull's name being used only in trust for Gery; and by means of this pretended deed poll of trust Minshull and Gery endeavoured to charge Steele with the whole £4000, although for £1500, part thereof, they or one of them had a former assignment, which was never delivered up, and no part of the residue, £2500, was paid until long after, and then only some part thereof in small sums, and, as Steele had reason to believe, raised out of the very share of the profits belonging to him; and in truth no such sum of £2500 was advanced by Gery at that time upon the said security, nor was the said declaration of trust executed till long afterwards, when there were various accounts between Minshull and Gery, and Gery was apprehensive that he should lose money by Minshull; nor did Gery till lately inform Steele of the said declaration of trust, and Steele apprehended he had nothing to do with any person but Minshull, as Minshull often informed him; and he looked upon Gery only as the order of Minshull, and accountable to Minshull for what he received; nor did Gery ever oppose or forbid Steele paying money to Minshull. And if any such trust were fairly declared for Gery, yet he ought only to stand in the place of Minshull as to what was due to Minshull on the 31st January 1717, and which he long since received with interest and a great overplus; and Wilbraham, in whose custody the assignment for £4000 was left, ought to have acquainted Gery that no part of the £4000 was advanced except the £1500 secured by Steele for the assignment; or at least Gery would have received such information if he had inquired of Wilbraham or Steele. And at other times Gery pretended he had assigned his interest in the premises to Woolley, and would not concern himself about the same, although he well knew that since the 11th December 1719, he had received of Castleman at several times the further sum of

£394, so that upon a fair account there now remained due from Steele to Minshull or his order only about £220, which sum Steele was willing to pay to Minshull or Gery or Woolley, as the Court should ordain, upon the cancelling of the several securities entered into by Steele to Minshull. But Minshull, Gery, and Woolley most unreasonably insisted upon charging Steele with the whole £4000 and interest from the 31st January, 1717, and nevertheless refused to discover when or how this £4000 was advanced or paid by Gery to Minshull, or what they knew or had been informed, or what interest Woolley had therein. All which being contrary to equity, Steele prayed that writs of subpœna might be directed to Minshull, Gery, Wilbraham, and Woolley, commanding them to answer the matters contained in this Bill.

Wilbraham's answer, dated 17th March 1721[-2], is the only one existing. It states that some short time before the 31st January 1717 Minshull gave Wilbraham directions for preparing such assignment or sale from Steele to Minshull of Steele's fifth part in the Theatre, as was mentioned in Steele's Bill, and two parts of such assignment were engrossed, leaving a blank for the consideration money; and Wilbraham said that to the best of his remembrance he carried the engrossments to Steele's then house in St. James's Street, and not to the Horn Tavern; and Wilbraham read over the assignment, and then Steele and Minshull retired to another room, as he apprehended to converse together upon the subject-matter of the assignment. When they returned, a proposal was made by one or both of them, that inasmuch as the assignment was drawn absolute and without any clause of redemption, and yet it was intended to be redeemable and to be only in the nature of a mortgage, the assignment when executed by Steele, should be deposited in Wilbraham's hands as a common trustee, and

that he should give to Minshull a note that the deed was in his custody, and that he would deliver it up to Steele upon Steele's redeeming the same within two years' time from the date of the deed. Steele particularly asked Wilbraham whether, in case the deed was deposited in his hands, the note would be sufficient to make the deed a mortgage, and Wilbraham said that it would, if the note were attested and witnessed by Minshull. Steele then acquiesced in the proposal, and did not in Wilbraham's hearing require any other defeasance of the deed; and Wilbraham was ordered to fill up the blank, and make the consideration £4000. The engrossed copies were then signed, and Steele gave a receipt for £4000, which was endorsed on the deed executed by him, and Wilbraham added his signature as witness. The deed was then handed to Wilbraham, who gave a receipt—as mentioned in Steele's Bill—which was attested by Minshull. Wilbraham was of opinion that Steele, like himself, then believed Minshull to be a man of substance. Wilbraham did not remember to have seen any money paid by Minshull to Steele, but believed Minshull gave Steele a note or receipt for £2500, for which sum Minshull promised to be accountable to Steele, and Wilbraham believed he added his signature as witness. Wilbraham denied that he assured Steele that this note or receipt would effectually secure him from any prejudice which might arise to him by his signing the receipt for £4000, or that he told Steele that if the £2500 were not paid him he would, by virtue of the note or receipt for £2500, be entitled to an allowance thereof out of the £4000, or that Steele asked him any questions relating thereto. He also denied that the deed was placed in his hands as a common trustee until the £2500 should be paid to Steele and a proper defeasance executed, or that until the same was done no use was to be made of the deed, or that then Steele's former assignment for £1500 was to be

delivered up to Steele; and he also denied that the deed was given to him upon any other terms than those set forth in the note which he gave; nor did he use any persuasion to induce Steele or Minshull to entrust the deed to him, or to induce Steele to sign the deed or the receipt thereon endorsed, or to accept Minshull's note or receipt for £2500; nor was he any way privy to or acquainted with the reasons which induced Steele to do the same, save that he knew the £1500 was or was mentioned to be the consideration of a former deed of sale of Steele's fifth share, dated about 24th July 1716. And Wilbraham had heard that Gery had, before the 31st January 1717, advanced £1500 to Minshull upon the credit of Steele's first assignment, and that Minshull had assigned over to Gery Steele's first assignment as security; but he did not then apprehend that Gery had advanced to Minshull, or was to advance, £2500, and therefore he understood himself to be only a trustee as between Steele and Minshull. But some time afterwards Minshull and Gery came to Wilbraham and told him that Gery had advanced a further sum of £2500, and that the whole £4000 was therefore, in truth, Gery's money. Wilbraham then drew up a declaration of trust to that effect, dated 31st January 1717, which was duly executed by Minshull in the presence of one Mr. William Aspin and Wilbraham, witnesses. But Wilbraham admitted that this deed was not executed on the 31st January 1717, as dated, but some time afterwards, though he could not remember the particular time. After the execution of this last deed Wilbraham considered himself as a common trustee between Steele and Gery. After all this, when, as Wilbraham believed, Minshull had failed in answering Steele's drafts of money upon him, Steele sent to Wilbraham and offered him thirty guineas to deliver up the deed of assignment of the 31st January, and said Minshull was consenting thereto; but Wilbraham answered that

Minshull's consent would not indemnify him for so doing, because he knew that the money intended to be secured by the assignment was not then Minshull's but Gery's, and that he must have Gery's consent; he therefore refused to deliver up the deed. And he believed Minshull sent to him when he was not at home, as narrated in Steele's Bill; and he from time to time acquainted Gery with the proceedings of Steele and Minshull; but he denied that he had threatened to give the deed to Gery, or had entered into any engagement with Gery for that purpose. The deed was still in his hands or power. He was never taken into council by Steele and Minshull, except that he paid, subsequently to the assignment of the 31st January 1717, £70 to Hugh Reason, Esq.,[1] for Steele by order of, and with the money of, Minshull, and had also seen several notes which Steele drew on Minshull, which he believed were paid by Minshull.

There is no record of this case having ever come before the Court, and there are no answers to Steele's Bill from Minshull, Gery, or Woolley. Fresh arrangements were entered into in 1723, as will be seen below.

[1] Reason was landlord of the house in York Buildings where Steele had his *Censorium*, and he brought an action for debt against Steele in 1718.

III.

STEELE AND SCURLOCK

v.

WILKS, CIBBER, BOOTH, CASTLEMAN, AND WOOLLEY, 1725—8.

(Page lxviii.)

IN their bill, dated 4th September 1725, the complainants,[1] after describing the Indenture Quadrupartite of June 3, 1724,[2] the Articles of Agreement of September, 1721,[3] the Indenture between Steele and Woolley of June 17, 1723, and the note to Castleman of July 17, 1723,[4] said that they well hoped they should have had the benefit of the assignment and letter of attorney to Scurlock

[1] Chancery Proceedings, Sewell 1714—58, No. 300.
[2] Page lxvii. [3] Page lvii.
[4] On the 17th June, 1723, an indenture was made between Steele and Woolley, reciting that there then remained due to Woolley £900, the residue of a greater sum for which one-fifth part of the profits of the theatre was mortgaged by Steele to Minshull, by whom it was assigned to Charles Gery, and by him to Woolley (page 430). This original mortgaged deed for £1200 Woolley delivered to Steele, upon payment of £300 on delivery, and the assignment to Woolley, his executors, &c., of the fifth part of the stock, for the better security of the payment of the remaining £900; and on the 17th July Steele signed a note upon Richard Castleman and every other treasurer of the Company of Comedians at Drury Lane, requiring each of them yearly on the 23rd January to pay to Woolley or his order £200 out of the profits coming due to Steele, until the £900 with interest at five per cent., should be fully paid.

for the payment of Steele's debts and incumbrances, and that Wilks, Cibber, and Booth would have ordered the treasurer of the theatre to have paid and duly accounted with Scurlock weekly, and for all arrears due to Steele at the time of the assignment, as in all justice and equity they ought to have done, the rather because Woolley had been long since paid the £900 due to him, together with all interest thereupon. But Wilks, Cibber, and Booth, confederating together with Castleman, their treasurer, and with Woolley and others, to defraud the complainants of their just right, and to elude the force of the assignment made by Steele for the benefit of his creditors, refused to come to any account with the complainants touching the profits, pretending that the charges they had been put to in finding clothes, scenes, &c., had been so great that they had made little or no clear profit, and yet they at the same time refused to disclose their expenses; and at other times they pretended that Steele by himself or his agents had from time to time received his full share of the profits; whereas the complainants expressly charged that the profits, over and above all expenses, had been very great, and that neither Steele nor any person acting by his order had received any but a very small and inconsiderable part of his share of the profits since the time of his entering into partnership with Wilks, Cibber, and Booth, and that there was now a very great sum owing to him. And at other times the defendants, and especially Woolley, pretended that the £900 secured for Woolley was not yet paid, and that until that was paid the provisions for the other creditors could not and ought not to take place; but the complainants expressly charged that this £900 was and ought long since to have been paid out of the profits of the fourth part belonging to Steele; and Woolley and the others refused to inform Steele how much had been paid to Woolley. And at other times Wilks, Cibber, and

Booth pretended that they, on the 24th January 1719[–20], were, together with Steele, suspended by the Lord Chamberlain from further acting, and that from the time of this suspension (whatever licence they afterwards obtained for proceeding therein), they were not answerable to Steele for any part of the profits; whereas Steele expressly charged that the suspension lasted only two days or thereabouts, neither could the Lord Chamberlain or any other person thereby or otherwise except by due course of law deprive him of his share of the profits, wherein he had a just freehold during his life by the Grant and Letters Patent from His Majesty; and therefore Wilks, Cibber and Booth ought to pay and be accountable to him for his just share as if no such suspension had been. And at other times the defendants pretended that by some provision in the aforesaid Articles of Agreement it was provided that neither of the parties thereto should at any time sell, mortgage, part with or incumber his or their share without the consent in writing of the rest of the said parties, and it was pretended that Wilks, Cibber, and Booth never gave such assent to the assignment made by Steele to Scurlock; whereas Steele and Scurlock declared that Wilks, Cibber, and Booth were well aware of the assignment before it was made, and had copies of it delivered to them severally afterwards, and although they did not give their consent in writing, yet they did not oppose or forbid the same; and if they had, yet the same being for the payment of Steele's creditors, it ought to be supported and made good by the Honourable Court, or at least it could not debar Steele from having an account of his share of the profits. Yet upon these and the like pretences the defendants not only refused to pay Scurlock, on behalf of Steele's creditors, but likewise refused to come to an account with Steele. Sometimes they pretended that they were entitled to a dividend of £10 a piece each week, or

some such considerable sum, out of the profits, in consideration of their extraordinary trouble in the management of the theatre and their playing their several parts, previous to and exclusive of the dividend to be made under the Articles between them and Steele, and they had accordingly ever since the date of the said Articles appropriated these sums, regardless of Steele's share or interest. And they pretended to be entitled to the whole of the money given by His Majesty or any of the Royal Family when they were graciously pleased to be present at any performances, and they had kept such moneys; whereas the complainants declared that Steele had a right to his share of all profits whatsoever. And the defendants pretended that they had a right to, and had set aside for their own use, £20 a night or some greater sum under the name of several constant charges, contingencies, and bills, and pretended that Steele had no right to share therein; and Steele charged that in favour of Mrs. Oldfield, Mrs. Porter, and Mrs. Booth, three of the actresses at Drury Lane, on their respective benefit nights the defendants had forborne to deduct the necessary expenses of the house out of the profits of the night, as they ought to have done, but had placed the same to the account of the partnership, whereby Steele had been charged a fourth part of those expenses without any profit whatever; and on the benefit nights allowed to under-officers and others of the theatre, they had deducted £5 each night, which they had shared and divided, without admitting Steele to any share. And sometimes the defendants pretended that Steele had no colour to call them to account touching any of these deductions or allowances to themselves, because he had from time to time passed and allowed these accounts without objection, and agreed to the said deductions, &c.; but this he never did; if he had passed accounts without objection, it was through want of knowledge or oversight. And Wilks, Cibber, and Booth had

in other ways defrauded Steele; it was therefore prayed that writs of subpœna might be issued to compel them, together with Castleman and Woolley, to answer these premises.

The "joint and several answers" of Wilks, Cibber, Booth, and Castleman are dated October 13, 1725. Long before the Letters Patent to Steele, Wilks, Cibber, and Booth had, as they said, a licence to act at Drury Lane, and were acting there at the Queen's death, and had scenes, &c., there of great value; and a short time after the Queen's death, they, looking upon Steele as a person who had a great acquaintance, and who was fit and able to promote the interest of the theatre, did, for these reasons, and out of friendship and kindness to Steele, invite him to come into a share and benefit of the theatre, for which he seemed very thankful; and it was agreed he should apply for a new licence, which he obtained, and which was afterwards, by agreement with them, changed for a Patent. The application for the Patent was to be in Steele's name only, but upon the express trust that Wilks, Cibber, and Booth should have an equal share in it; and when Steele applied, he informed these defendants that he could not obtain a reference to the Attorney and Solicitor-General for having such a Patent without first having their consent, as they shared with him in the licence; and they thereupon gave their written consent to Steele, to whom a Patent was then granted. And some time afterwards Steele agreed to give them £1200 as a consideration for the fourth part of the scenes, clothes, &c., belonging to them, and did pay to each of them £400, as appears from the receipts. Then came the Articles Quadrupartite of September 1721. By acting under the Letters Patent the defendants had received large sums, which had been entered in books and kept by Richard Castleman, their treasurer and cashier. Divers sums had been paid to great numbers of persons

weekly and otherwise, as they were entitled to receive the same; and the accounts had been at sundry times stated and settled by the defendants and Steele, and Steele had received his share; on the 18th June 1723, in particular, he gave his receipt as follows: "Received of Richard Castleman £708 8s. 2d., being so much due to me arising from the profits of the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, I say received in full to this day, RICHARD STEELE." This was a stated account, and ought not to be ravelled into. From June 18, 1723, to June 25, 1725, divers other considerable sums had been received and paid on account of the theatre; and Steele, or persons lawfully authorised by him, had received his share thereof. On June 25, 1725, Richard Eadnell received of Castleman, by virtue of a letter of attorney executed to him by Steele, £52 10s. 3d., as Eadnell's receipt showed: "I say received for Sir Richard Steel's use ballance due for the year 1725, £471 13s. 2d., being a fourth part of the clear profits," &c.; and these defendants acknowledged that they had each of them received to their own use from the 18th June, 1723, £1 13s. 4d. for every day upon which a play had been acted, exclusive of Steele. This they claimed as a consideration for their acting and the extraordinary charge they were put to in respect thereof, for which they had no allowance in the said accounts; and they said that Steele never made any objection to the same to their knowledge till the filing of this bill. There had been from time to time paid to other actors more than £1 13s. 4d. a day for acting. On the 18th June last the defendants left off acting under the Letters Patent, and so discontinued until the 4th September last, during which interval no profits did or could arise; and since the 4th September they had acted seventeen nights and no more up to the time of putting in this answer, and the clear profits of those seventeen nights could not at present be set forth, because tradesmen's bills were not

sent in; but as soon as they could the defendants were ready to account for the same and to share all just allowances. They denied that they had deducted or claimed £10 a week for management or acting, or any sum other than as above mentioned, nor had they set apart or divided among themselves £20 a night or other sum on pretence of incidental charges, &c., exclusive of Steele, nor had they taken to their own use, exclusive of Steele, any part of such bounty money as His Majesty or any members of the Royal Family had given. And they said that Mrs. Oldfield, Mrs. Porter, and Mr. Mills had plays once in every year acted for their respective benefit, without any sums being deducted for the charge of the house, which was the best agreement the defendants could make with them; no other actors had the like privilege of having benefit plays without deduction for the charges of the house; and these defendants denied that they had had any benefit thereby, exclusive of Steele. And they said that, finding by long experience that the profits grew less towards the end of the spring and until June or July, the time of leaving off acting, £5 for every acting night was and had been kept back in order to make up the charges of the house in case the money received should not be sufficient for that purpose, —which often happened about the latter end of the season; but when they left off acting the said sum of £5 was always brought to account, and what remained after the charges were paid was divided among these defendants and Steele equally. And these defendants said that they had great ground to expect that Steele would not, contrary to his own express agreement with them in writing, have sold, parted with, or encumbered his property in the Patent, clothes, scenes, and profits to any one without the defendants' consent in writing, especially because that to accommodate Steele and at his particular request (he being indebted to Edward Minshull, Esq., in

the sum of £200, by whom the debt was assigned to Mr. Gery, and by him to Mr. Woolley) these defendants consented and agreed with Steele and Woolley that Castleman should pay to Woolley £200 a year out of Steele's share till the debt, with interest, should be paid. There was now £500 of the debt unpaid, and no interest had been paid. By Articles Quadrupartite, dated 19th September 1721,[1] between Steele, Wilks, Cibber, and Booth, reciting the aforesaid Articles, and also that the then Lord Chamberlain did some time since by his order direct that Steele should not be paid his fourth part, Steele did, for himself, his executors, &c., agree that if at any time the King, Lord Chamberlain, or other person authorised by the King should order that Steele be not paid his share, but should direct that Steele's share should be paid to any other person, that Steele's share should cease to be paid to him, and he should be debarred from demanding his share during the continuance of such order; and so with any proportion of Steele's share. Steele had some time since been suspended, but the defendants denied that they ever took advantage thereof. They were strangers to the several demands made by persons named in the complainants' bill as creditors of Steele, and conceived they were in nowise concerned therein. Castleman denied that he refused to let Steele see the books.

Richard Eadnell, of the Inner Temple, Gent., solicitor to Steele and Scurlock, made oath on the 27th October, that on Wednesday the 20th October he applied to Castleman, treasurer at the old playhouse in Drury Lane, on behalf of the complainants, and told him that he had occasion to look in the books of accounts kept for Steele and the defendants, and that he, the deponent, would wait on Castleman for that purpose when convenient. But Castleman said he could show no books or give any

[1] Page lvii.

information without an order to do so from the other defendants. And on the 21st Eadnell applied to Wilks, Cibber, and Booth, but they utterly refused to give an order to Castleman, saying that no one should inspect the books or papers save Steele himself. Notice was subsequently given to the defendants' solicitor that the Court would be asked to make an order that these books could be examined by Steele or his solicitor;[1] and the order was duly granted. On the 2nd February 1726 Eadnell made oath that by virtue of this order he had looked over the books, and by them it appeared that Wilks, Cibber, and Booth had each received of Castleman £480 10s. (*sic*) for clear profits from the beginning of that season till Saturday, 15th January last, and Castleman had received the like sum of £487 10s. for the use of Steele, out of which he had paid £200 to Woolley, as arranged; but Castleman refused to pay Eadnell the remaining £287 10s. without the consent of Wilks, Cibber, and Booth. Eadnell thereupon applied to them, and gave them a copy of a letter of attorney duly executed by Steele and Scurlock, empowering him to receive and give discharges for such money as should become due to them from the theatre; but Wilks, Cibber, and Booth absolutely refused to direct Castleman to pay Eadnell, unless Eadnell would give them discharges for £30 which they received weekly on pretence of acting exclusive of Steele, and which was now in dispute in that Court. Wilks, Cibber, and Booth had received this £10 apiece weekly over and above the £487 10s. since the commencement of the winter season, and still intended to receive the same, as they informed Eadnell, notwithstanding the same was in dispute. And it appeared that over and above the £487 10s. and the £30 weekly, the sum of £30 a week was kept in the hands of the treasurer under the name of contingencies, in case there should be occasion to advance any money

[1] Chancery Affidavits (Registers), Mich. 1725, Nos. 101, 102.

at any time on account of any new performances or otherwise.[1]

The defendants having put in their answer, Steele's counsel obtained leave, on the 12th February, to amend the complainants' bill.[2] The answer of Wilks, Cibber, and Booth to this amended bill is dated 15th June 1726. The defendants said they never refused to disclose to Steele the expenses incurred for scenes, clothes, &c.; those charges were entered in books which Steele could examine, and which they had reason to believe he had often inspected. In accordance with the order of the Court of the 28th October last, Eadnell had often examined the books, and was never denied the same. They submitted, therefore, whether they need do more than refer to the books as regards the particular sums laid out in clothes, scenes, &c. They never denied that Steele might controvert the accounts, but they apprehended he had no reason to do so, for the allowances they demanded were reasonable, and were for the daily and extraordinary labour and expenses in acting their several parts not otherwise charged for. If they had not taken upon themselves to look after and manage the theatre, they and Steele, instead of being gainers, would have lost by it; and if Steele had been as active on his part in the management as they (which he ought to have been by their Agreement), the same would have been an addition to the clear profits of the theatre, at least one fourth part.

In the meantime, Wilks, Cibber, and Booth had commenced a cross action against Steele.[3] In their bill, dated 11th January 1725—26, they said that Swiney and Collier had both constantly attended the business of the theatre, and much benefit had resulted therefrom; Collier

[1] Chancery Affidavits (Registers), Hilary 1725[-6], No. 204.
[2] Chancery Decrees, 1725B, 203.
[3] Chancery Proceedings, Reynardson, 1714—58, No. 2416; Chancery Decrees, 1727B, 224.

solicited persons of quality, and drew audiences to the theatre. When Steele was invited to come into partnership, he faithfully promised to attend the meetings and consultations of the Company, and to write plays and other performances, and to use his utmost endeavour to support the interest thereof; and he did continue to attend the business of the Company until 28th January 17:9—20, since when he had altogether absented himself. From that date they had each taken to their own use £1 13s. 4d. a day, and Steele was so conscious that they deserved a much greater sum that he allowed the accounts wherein the same was charged. The scope of this cross bill, therefore, was that Wilks, Cibber, and Booth might be quieted in receiving the said £1 13s. 4d. apiece exclusive of Steele, and might have such allowance as the Court should think reasonable for the expense they were at in clothes, periwigs, laces, and linen, and for their trouble in instructing the actors and overseeing artificers, &c., and might be indemnified in paying the £1200 and interest to Woolley, and be relieved.

Steele's answer to this bill was taken by commission by Alexander and Theophilus Scurlock on June 23, 1726. He denied that on entering into the partnership he promised to attend meetings or instruct young actors, not being qualified or required to appear as an actor; but he believed he did in general promise to write plays, and to promote the interests of the theatre, and this he had done to the utmost of his power, as the managers had often admitted; see, for example, Cibber's dedication to him of *Ximena*. *The Conscious Lovers* "brought more money to the House than any play was ever known to do;" and he was at that time preparing, as fast as his health would permit, a new Comedy, which, God willing, he hoped to finish by the next season, the plot of which play was formed for the reformation of the theatre, and restoring the credit and good sense of theatrical enter-

tainments, which he was sadly sensible was never more wanted. He had done and was doing as much as his health would permit. He had entered into an agreement on the 4th September 1721, and then or shortly before, when accounting for his share during the time of the pretended suspension by the Lord Chamberlain, the other managers had urged that they had lost much in 1720 in connection with the South Sea scheme, and that Steele had not borne his share of the cost of scenes; and he then, out of pure friendship and good-will, forgave them £1,200, which he believed was due to him. Steele insisted that he was not obliged to make Wilks, Cibber, and Booth any allowance for their managing and acting, as they were by the Articles obliged to do their duty in consideration of the three fourth parts they received; but he denied that he had pretended they ought not to be allowed for clothes, &c., used on the stage, he being willing to allow his share out of the joint stock; and he believed they had frequently taken out of the joint stock for their own private clothes, which they brought to the joint account; all which Steele allowed without objection. He admitted he asked permission to assign his share, and, being refused, assigned his interest without such consent to Scurlock, and he hoped that what he did through the need of satisfying his creditors would not in equity be a breach of his covenant. He did not know of the deduction of £1 13s. 4d. a day till the beginning of 1724[-5], when he brought his bill to be relieved against it; and he hoped that notwithstanding his signing the receipt of the 18th June 1723, he should be at liberty to call the managers to an account touching the said deduction.

The original cause was before the Court several times in August and October 1726.[1] Leave was given to Wilks, Cibber, and Booth to examine Castleman, a

[1] Chancery Decrees, 1725B, 425; 1726B, 464; 2, 115.

material witness for their case, and in no way concerned in point of interest in the matters in question; and upon application that Castleman should pay Steele £468 4s., which was found to be his share of the clear profits for 1725, it was ordered, by consent, that Castleman should pay Steele £200, subject to the order which should be made upon the hearing of the cause. In December leave was given to Steele and Scurlock to examine Castleman as a witness for them. The "answer of William Woolley, Esqre., one of the Defendants to the Bill of Complaint" of Steele and Scurlock, was not put in until the 20th October 1726.[1] It contains nothing fresh of importance. Woolley said he had received £600 of the £900 due to him from Steele, and that £300 was still due, besides interest; and he urged that he was entitled to his £200 a year in preference to all other creditors mentioned in Steele's bill. On the 21st November, Wilks, Cibber, and Booth obtained leave to amend their bill in the case in which they were complainants; and Alexander and Theophilus Scurlock were again commissioned to take Steele's answer.[2] In this answer to the amended bill, which was not sworn until the 11th May 1727, Steele said it was true that he had declared that Cibber's zeal for the *Conscious Lovers* was an obliging favour and friendship to him, but he was referring to Cibber's care in instructing the actors, &c. Cibber did make several alterations in the play before it was acted, but to its disadvantage, and therefore he did not pay Cibber anything for his meddling. The piece ran eighteen nights, and brought £2,536 3s. 6d. to the house, but how much was paid for charges and how much to him Steele could not say, save £329 5s. or thereabouts, which he received for three author's benefit nights. He could not set

[1] Chancery Proceedings, Sewell, A., 1714—58, No. 66.
[2] Chancery Decrees, 1726B, 105; Chancery Proceedings, Reynardson, 1714—58, No. 2416.

forth particular passages altered by Cibber; if he did, it might run him, in vindication of his own performance, into a sort of criticism very improper, as he apprehended, for the entertainment of that Honourable Court.

In October and November 1727, publication in the original cause was twice enlarged, upon the petition of the defendants, and on the 3rd February 1728, upon the original cause coming before the Court, the defendants' counsel alleged that the counter action was ready for hearing, but that as Steele lived at Carmarthen the plaintiffs in that action had not had time to serve him with a subpœna to hear judgment; and they said that both causes were proper to be heard together. Whereupon it was ordered that the original cause should stand over to the fourth day of causes after the term, and that judgment should then be pronounced in both causes.[1] The combined suits accordingly came to a hearing before Sir Joseph Jekyll, Master of the Rolls, on Saturday night, the 17th February 1728, at the Rolls Chapel,[2] when Cibber addressed the Court, acting upon the advice of his counsel, who pointed out that he could speak better upon the question of the business of a manager than the most learned lawyer. Two of the counsel for Steele afterwards held the post of Lord Chancellor, and Cibber professes to have almost broken down with nervousness; but he succeeded, with the help of notes, in making a successful speech of an hour's length, which he has printed at length in the sixteenth chapter of his *Apology*. He maintained that Steele was as much obliged to do the

[1] Chancery Decrees, 1726B, 461; 1727B, 8, 133.

[2] Chancery Decrees, 1727B, 224; *St. James's Evening Post*, February 17—20, 1728; *The Weekly Journal* (Read's), and *The Country Journal; or, The Craftsman*, February 24, 1728. Cibber, with his usual inaccuracy, speaks of the case coming to a hearing in 1726, though, as Genest remarks, he mentions a theatrical coronation which, of course, was prompted by the coronation of George II. in 1727.

duty and business of a manager as either Wilks, Booth, or Cibber; and the reason why he had ceased to take any part in the management was, that he was annoyed at his fellow-managers, who had often helped him when he was in want of money, but who found it necessary at last to peremptorily refuse to advance another shilling until it was due to him. After that Steele not only absented himself, but made an assignment of his share, without the consent of the others, in breach of their Agreement, thereby exposing them to the chance of trouble and inconvenience. His absence, too, had led to more than proportionate loss, because his rank, and figure in the world, and the ready access which he had at Court, had been of great service; that was, in fact, the very end and consideration of his share in the profits. Cibber proceeded to argue that he, Wilks, and Booth had been justified in charging £1 13s. 4d. a day for their extraordinary labour, in Steele's absence, by graphically describing the multitude of duties and disagreeable tasks which fell to a manager's lot. Steele had not written plays for nothing, and though, said Cibber, in writing *The Conscious Lovers*, "he had more assistance from one of the managers than becomes me to enlarge upon, of which evidence has been given upon oath by several of our actors, yet, Sir, he was allowed the full and particular profits of that play as an author, which amounted to three hundred pounds, besides about three hundred more which he received as a joint sharer of the general profits that arose from it." Cibber adds, in another place, that when they told Steele of the salary they meant to take for themselves in future, Steele only remarked that he had no reason to doubt of their doing him justice, and he never complained for nearly three years; indeed it was not until his affairs were put into the hands of lawyers and trustees that his lawyer thought that here was a fair field for an action in Chancery, in

which, whatever the result might be, his bill would be paid.

After hearing Cibber, and the counsel on both sides,—the proceedings lasted five hours,—the Master of the Rolls declared that he saw no good cause for breaking through the account dated 18th June 1723, or for varying the allowances of £1 13s. 4d. which had been made at that time to each of the defendants, Wilks, Cibber, and Booth. He therefore ordered that the account dated the 18th June 1723 should stand, and that it should be referred to Mr. Bennett to take an account of the profits of the theatre from that time; the defendants were to produce before the said Master upon oath all books of account, &c., and to be examined as the Master should direct; and in taking the account the Master was to make to the defendants all just allowances. His Honour declared he conceived the allowance of £1 which had been already made to each of the defendants for management every night was a reasonable allowance, and that they ought to have this allowance continued to them until Steele should come into the management of the theatre; but the Master must determine what the defendants respectively deserved for their charges for wigs, lace, and linen, for which Steele admitted by his answer that an allowance should be made; and he was also to take an account of what was due to Woolley for principal and interest on his mortgage, and to tax Woolley's costs in this suit. The Master was also to ascertain what would be coming to Steele for his fourth part of the profits on the balance of the account, and from what was certified as due to Steele, Wilks, Cibber, and Booth should pay to Woolley what was reported due to him in the first place for principal, interest, and costs as aforesaid, and should pay the remainder to Scurlock for the uses mentioned in the deed of assignment from Steele to Scurlock, or to whoever Scurlock should authorise to receive the same;

and Wilks, Cibber, and Booth were hereby indemnified for so doing; and they were to continue to pay Steele's fourth part of the growing profits, under such allowances as aforesaid, to Steele or to whoever he should authorise to receive the same. And it was further ordered that Steele and Scurlock's bill against Castleman be dismissed out of the court; and that no costs be paid to either of the said parties, except to Woolley.

The Master's Report is dated July 10, 1728.[1] Mr. Bennett said that the plaintiffs' solicitors having allowed Wilks, Cibber, and Booth 13s. 4d. apiece for every day a play was acted, from the 18th June 1723, as the same had been allowed up to that time, he had taken an account of Steele's fourth part of the profits from the said 18th June to the present time, and found that that fourth part amounted to £2,692 3s. 3d., in discharge whereof he found that the said defendants had paid to Steele or order several sums, amounting to £1,601 3s. 3d., leaving due to Steele £1,091. And the clerk in court for Woolley had admitted that Woolley had been already paid off and discharged all the principal and interest due to him on Steele's account; and the Master had already, by his Report of the 5th instant, taxed Woolley's bill of costs at £29 2s. 10d., which sum he appointed Wilks, Cibber, and Booth to pay Woolley out of the said sum of £1,091 in their hands, and the residue, £1,061 17s. 2d., they were to pay to Scurlock, as directed by the order of the 17th February. On the following day, July 11, 1728, upon motion made by the counsel for the defendants in the original cause, this Report and all contained therein was confirmed by order and decree of the Court.[2]

[1] Masters' Reports, Easter, 1728; Steele, &c., *v.* Wilks, &c.
[2] Chancery Decrees, 1727B, 425.

THE END.

3 9000 022 624 469

INDIANA
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

NORTHWEST

O6-BJD-468